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GERMAN SEA POETRY

by

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Introduction.

It has often been stated that sea poetry, that is to say literature in which the sea and sea faring find poetic expression, first makes its entry into German literature in the year 1826¹⁾. Heinrich Heine, the first cycle of whose 'Nordsee' appeared in that year, is regarded²⁾, and throughout life continued to regard himself³⁾, as its pioneer. Students of literature have known for some time, however, that this view is not to be accepted without modification. Careful investigation has revealed the existence of at least a small number of forerunners in the eighteenth century³⁾; in medieval literature also the sea occasionally plays a part. The old ballad of Stortebeker the North Sea pirate is known to every student of the German folk song and there is no reason to suppose that it was the only one of its kind. The prominent position of the sea and of ships in nineteenth century German poetry requires no proof. There is not yet in existence, however, a comprehensive study of the part played by sea poetry in the corpus of German literature as a whole. The present dissertation represents an attempt to marshal and characterise the materials for such a work.

(Berl. 1903)

1) cf. F. Melchior: Heine's Verhältnis zu Byron, p. 96: 'Heine hat sich auf die Eroberung dieses neuen Stoffgebietes viel zu gute getan, und sich zeitlebens als den unbestrittenen Bahnbrecher auf dem Gebiete der Seedichtung angesehen'.

2) cf. C. C. Eggert: 'Heines Poems' (Boston, 1906) XIV: 'H. was the first German poet of the 'wide-rolling' sea'.

3) vide infra, p. 24 passim.

Part I .

THE MIDDLE AGES .

O.H.G. and O.S.Literature.

A breath of the sea --westar ubar wentilsēo-- is wafted to us from the very threshold of German literature,¹⁾ although the allusion to the 'sea farers' whose report led Hadubrand to believe his father dead is of the most tantalising brevity. Salt water and ships must indeed have been familiar conceptions to the Germanic warrior ever since he first began his raids into the Roman Empire²⁾, if not before ; the age of migrations swept him from Central Europe to the Straits of Gibraltar and the Black Sea , while the marine propensities of the Northern tribes are writ large on nearly every page of Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian literature³⁾. It seems legitimate to assume, considering especially the 'reciprocal free trade' in sagas and motifs formerly existing between the Germanic nations, that in continental literature too these marine traditions must have left at least an echo . Owing to the predominatingly religious character of the monuments which have come down to us , however , the sea plays but an insignificant part in Old High German and Old Saxon poetry as we know it . A few references like those in the Wessobrunner Gebet and the Hildebrandslied , coupled with certain episodes in Otfrid and

1) Hildebrandsli., 1.43, 44 ;

2) cf. the list of nautical terms suggesting Roman influence given in Kluge: Urgermanisch, I, § 8, c .

3) cf. Merbach, p. 1 (~~et seq.~~) H. Da. Meer i. d. Dichtung d. Angelsachsen (Breslau, 1884)
p. 1 et seq.

Heliand (the storm on the Lake of Galilee ; Christ walking on the water) constitute all the material available for an investigation of the early German poet's acquaintance with and attitude towards 'der mareo sēo' . What is the nature of these materials and what conclusions , tentative though they cannot but be , do they enable us to draw ?

The Hildebrandslied , as already mentioned , alludes briefly to 'seo līdante , westar ubar wentilsēo' , in a phrase which finds its parallels in O.E. poetry¹⁾ and has been claimed as an epic formula common to the Saxon tribes , the use of which affords yet another argument to those who believe in an originally Low German authorship of the poem²⁾. A similar passage, possibly permitting a similar conclusion³⁾, 'Lietz her heidine man obar sēo līdan ', occurs in the Ludwigslied (l. 11). In the Wessobr. Gebet we are told that neither the moon nor 'der mareo sēo' existed before the creation of the world (l. 5). In Otfrid and Heliand the aspect of the sea described is of course determined by the N.T. original and it is interesting to note that Otfrid contents himself with a literal translation in which descriptive details do not occur while the author of Heliand displays a considerable amount of imagination in elaborating

1) cf. the passages from Beowulf quoted by Merbach, p. 2.
2) ibid.

and expanding the concise, matter of fact account of Christ's crossing of the Lake of Galilee as given in the Vulgate. The Saviour enters a boat (*ēnna nacon*, 2237), his disciples (*weder-wisa weras*) hoist sail (2238) and 'let the wind drive on behind them' until they reach the middle of the lake. 'The *wedares craft*' then beginning is described in considerable detail. 'The wind rises', 'the waves grow', 'darkness falls' (*swang giswerc an gimang*), 'the sea is stirred up', 'wind strives with water'. After the stilling of the storm 'the boat, the high-horned ship' passes on and the heroes land.

Again (*Hel.*, chap. 35) the disciples make the high-horned ship 'divide the strong stream, the clear waves, the pure water'. Nightfall, the rising of the wind, the roaring of the waves, the rush of water against the stem of the ship (*strōm an stamne*) the battling of the men against the wind, and the terror of the '*lagulīdāndea*' (2918) are described at length. Peter calls to his master '*obar bord skipes*' and steps '*af themu stamne*' to go to him. He sees the waves drive with the wind ('*driβen gesah there wēg mid windu*', 2943); the waves and the stream surround him. The water gives way under him and he sinks 'in the sea stream' until, the Saviour taking him by the hand, the pure water grows firm under his feet' and they step 'from the

stream over the ship's side' , after which The best of all men is seated 'an themu stamme' (2961).

The strikingly detailed reproduction of these two scenes by the author of Hel. has frequently been commented upon and has even been taken to argue familiarity and sympathy with the sea.²⁾ Had the writer himself, before he donned the cowl, 'cleft the clear waves' in his 'high-horned ship' ; was he a coast dweller, descended of a family of sea rovers ; or did he merely draw upon a stock of epic formulae, thrice-hackneyed clichés of the North German scop, enshrined in a multitude of heroic poems lost to us ? If Scherer is correct in regarding the last alternative as the most probable , the mere fact of the existence of a recognized terminology of this kind would at least suggest that the sea must have played a more prominent part in the no longer extant portion of the old German corpus poeticum than it does in the scanty remains which have come down to us .

An examination of the epithets applied to the sea in the material at our disposal reveals many agreements with the language of the O.E. heroic poems and lends additional force to the contentions of Scherer and Merbach . The Hildebrandsl. indeed offers no help (except 'Wentilseo' =O.E.'Wendel Sae' =

1) Vogt u. Koch, p.34. 2) Heusler; Über den Stil des Heliand, quoted in Jahresber. f. Germ. Phil. vol.39/40, I, p.215 .
3) Scherer: Gesch.d.deut.Lit.(Berl., 1883) p.47: 'Dankbare Themata für welche er (d.Autor des Hel.) die fertige epische Technik besitzt, lässt er sich nicht entgehen: Gastmähler u.Seestürme werden in den geläufigen Formeln geschildert.' Cf. also list of O.E. parallels (epic formulae?) given by Merbach, p.48-9.

Vandal Sea) ; Wessobr.Geb. speaks of 'der mǣreo sēo' (= 'die herrliche Flut', Piper; 'das grosse herrliche Meer', Mullenhöff). To the author of Hel. the sea is 'wāgo strōm' (1820), 'meristrōm' (2240, 2931), 'gebenes strōm' (2936), 'sēostrōm' (2947), 'lagustrōm' (2955), 'ahastrōm' (1153), 'swīthi strōm' (2906), 'thia strōmos' (2255, 2963), 'flōd' (2260, 2911, etc), 'diap water' (2937, 2943), 'hlutter water' (2958), 'skīr water' (2907), 'brēd water' (2962), or simply 'water' (2249, 2953).

The vessel in which the Saviour crosses the Lake of Galilee is 'the high-horned ship' (2265, 2953). The disciples are 'wederwīsa weros' (2239), 'seo-līdēndea' (2909), 'lagulīdēndea' (2918).

It is impossible to deduce from the passages quoted above what feelings (if any!) their authors may have entertained towards the ocean¹⁾; 'the foamy field' (fāmig feld), 'the age-old flood' (fyrnstrēam); which provided the Anglo-Saxon poets with so many picturesque metaphors . In O.H.G. and O.S. the sea only appears as a part of nature , created together with earth, sky, sun, moon, stars (etc) by an almighty God (Wessobr. Geb.), crossed by 'seo līdānte' (Hildebrandsl.) or battled with by the disciples (Otfrid, Hel.). In no place can it be said to have been

1) The Lake of Galilee may here be taken as = the sea .

introduced for its own sake ; even the author of Hel. clings to the bible story . One cannot but wonder what he could have given us, had he been less of a cleric or writing for a less bigoted master . The author of Beowulf too was a Christian , -- but Lewis the Pious, we know, had no rings for the scōp unless he tuned his harp to a monkish hymn .

M.H.G., M.L.G. and Early N.H.G. Literature.

The all but complete absence of the very word sea from the vocabulary of older German poetry allows itself to be at least partly explained by the peculiar limitations imposed upon it by its mainly religious subject matter, as well as by its inland origin among the inhabitants of Central and Southern Germany, who, it is to be presumed, enjoyed fewer opportunities of seeing salt water than their present day Bavarian or Swiss descendants. A priori considerations promise a more ample harvest in the new era ushered in by the crusades and the Mediterranean adventures of the Hohenstaufen emperors; an anticipation which is to some extent confirmed by a study of M.H.G. literature. Not only in Kudrun, 'a viking poem' according to Biese, but in the M.H.G. epic generally, in the 'Spielmann' and 'court' no less than in the 'popular' variety, the sea and navigation play a not inconspicuous part; it is in fact no exaggeration to say that a voyage to a far country, including if possible a passage through the 'lebermere', a gale, and a distant sight of the Magnetic Mountain, forms one of the indispensable elements of the Spielmann's epic.

1) Quoted Koch, p. 12¹: Das Meer i. d. mhd. Epik (Münster, 1910), p. 12.

epic . In this period , too , however , the inland origin of all the sea poetry which has come down to us , must be stressed. The viking tradition which according to Biese finds its reflection in Kudrun has left no other literary traces of its existence ; we seek in vain for a German companion picture to the 'shipman' in the Canterbury Tales ; even the voluminous record of Krieg, Handel , and Piraterie associated with the Hanseatic League appears to have left no trace in medieval literature save the (imperfectly preserved) ballad of the capture and execution of Störtebeker and his fellow Vitalienbrüder . Of the 2175 folk songs included in Erk-Böhme's collection only twelve are localised on or deal with the sea , and most , if not all , even of these appear to be of High German , i.e. inland origin , actually substituting , in some versions , 'der' for 'die' See . Middle and Later Low German literature is particularly disappointing in respect to poetry (dignified or popular) dealing with the sea ; a phenomenon which suggests that despite the qualified protest made by Poeck¹⁾, the time-honoured observation 'Frisia non cantat' is not devoid of foundation in fact²⁾ . German sea poetry in the Middle Ages in short is practically confined to the M.H.G. epics .

1) Poeck: Die See in der plattdeutschen Lyrik .

2) vide infra, p. 131.

Both M.H.G. literature and the Folk song know the sea mainly as the home of the ~~traveller~~ seaman or traveller (crusader , pirate) :

Her Hinrich und sine Broder alle dree,

Se buweden ein Schepken tor See,

.....

Do dat Schepken rede was

Se setten sick darin, se forden all darhen .¹⁾

Epic after epic tells us how the hero '...hiz...sin here

mit schiffen varen in daz

mere,²⁾

or sets out for the Holy Land 'über des wilden sewes vluot' ,

but no case³⁾ can be adduced in which the sea receives description unless thus introduced by the necessities of the plot . Descript- details , however , are both numerous and varied .

The sea , the sea shore , waves , storms , sea monstera , 'mer wip' , 'daz lebermere' , the magnetic mountain , sea fishes , sea roses , sea fogs , ships (of diverse kinds), nautival implements , seamen of various ranks , ship building , navigation , departures , shipwrecks , Landfalls, and other details connected with the sea and ships are of frequent

1) Erk u. Böhm, vol. I, No 38 (Herr Hinrich). 2) Alexanderlied, l. 1033

3) Excepting metaphors and analogies ; cf. Heinrich v. Melk : Von des todes gehugede, l. 650 : Chêre din schef ze stette

Daz dich inmitten uf dem mer

Die sundern winde hin und her

Denne icht ane bözen ..

Other examples in Koch, chap. II .

occurrence in the M.H.G.epic¹⁾. It would be possible, from the material here quoted alone, to construct a practically complete picture of sea faring and life at sea during the centuries represented by the epic confirming and to some extent supplementing that drawn by Frahm²⁾; a picture, however, which from internal evidence must probably be taken as applying to Mediterranean rather than to Northern waters. The folk songs on the other hand, like the English ballads, yield few details. As a rule we are merely informed that the hero or the heroine 'went to sea':

'Die Frau Fischerin

Die fuhr wohl über See',³⁾ or

'Die edlen Herren von Hamburg

Gingen zu Segel wohl mit der Flut

Hin nach dem neuen Werke ' to capture Stortebeker and his pirate crew.⁴⁾

A similar matter-of-factness is to be observed when one examines the epithets applied to the sea in the literature of the period. Most of the designations for the sea which occur in Heliand are found again in the M.H.G.epics: mer, se, unde,

1) cf. Koch, Chaps. III, IV, V, VI for a detailed account and references.

2) W. Frahm: Das Meer u.d. Seefahrt i.d. altfranzös. Lit. (Gött., 1914)

3) Erk u. Böhm, vol. I, No 950 b.

4) ibid., vol II, No 233.

welle, wac, vluot, salz se, meres'vluot(very common), meres-
unden (less common), meres-wac (rare), des wages bad, wages
vluot, wazzer, wazzers vluot, stram (stran,tran), salz se,
sulze, muoder, straze, selp-wege, gruntwellen .The sea is
described as wit, breit, tief, mîchel unde grôz, gruntlos,
wild, tobend ('Die Fulle der ~~wild, tobend~~, Zusammenstel-
lungen von mer u.s.w. mit diesen Beiwörtern ,die in der Mhd.
Epik fast handgreiflich starr geworden sind, ist unübersehbar'),
ungevuege ; the waves are starr,tief, grôz, hôh, and snel .
It has been noted that in the Spielmannsepik in particular
(Oswald, Orendel,Salm.& Mor.) the epithet 'wild' as applied
to the sea is extraordinarily common, even^{where} it is obviously out
place, as in Wolfdietrich,D.V.,52,1 :

'sîn kiel gienc im ebene ûf dem wilden se' ³⁾

Not infrequently,however, no epithets at all are given :
'ein stat bi dem mer' (Alexanderl. 1.680,691,2550,etc).It is
significant,too, that references to the colour of the sea are
practically non-existent ; 'nur einmal heisst der Meeresschaum,
auf dem die Sonnenstrahlen spielen, 'blanc' (glänzend,hell),
und Kudrun 1126.2. u.1128.2. wird das Lebermeer 'daz vinster
mer' genannt ; gern jedoch stellt der Dichter das Meer als ge-
rötet dar vom Blute erschlagener Helden.'³⁾

1) Koch,p.33 .

2) ibid. p.34, where several additional examples are quoted.

3) ibid. p. 17 .

The German Volkslied (again like the English popular ballad) is characterised by extreme paucity of epithets : 'Von der Burg bis über die See' ('Die schöne Hannele'), 'de Tie', 'de Bulgens' (idem, Oldenburg version), 'das Meer' ('Heinrich der Löwe') ; 'de ruskende See' ('Die zwei Königskinder') , 'de wilde See' ('Fünf Söhne', 'Störtebeker'), 'das wilde Meer' ('Die Frau Fischerin') exhaust the list . Once 'das grüne Meer' occurs and here it may fairly be doubted whether the adjective, which only occurs in two out of the nine versions given in Erk u. Böhm, formed part of the original text .

'Durch die Seeschilderungen in den mhd. ... Epen klingt stets der Ton eines geheimen Schreckens, den die Dichter vor dem Meere und dem Aufenthalte auf ihm fühlen' ¹⁾ . The prominence of the epithets 'wild', 'tobende', and 'ungevüege', especially the habitual use of the first two words indeed warrant the conclusion that it was the agitated, angry element, 'the grey old widow-maker' , which had impressed itself most strongly upon the consciousness of medieval man . In several cases 'des meres vluot' is referred to as the all-devouring monster threatening to engulf the hero in its maw ²⁾ ; the billows and the gale ³⁾

1) Koch, p. 18 . 2) Tr. Kr. quoted Koch, p. 31 . 3) Eineit, ibid. p. 36 .
~~4) Trist., ibid. p. 37 .~~ 5) ibid., p.

are the sailor's active enemies ; Yseult is asked by Tristan whether it is the sight of the sea that it is contributing to her melancholy ¹⁾. 'Das Meer hat wie in der ags. so auch in der mhd. Epik ein Doppelantlitz, entweder ein "düsteres, wildes, vom Sturm zerwühltes, oder ein freundlich-heiteres, sonnenbestrahltes ; doch "überwiegt in den mhd. Epen die "düstere Anschauung die freundliche um ein beträchtliches , ja man kann sagen sie ist die allein vorherrschende, von verschwindend kleinen Ausnahmen abgesehen.' ²⁾ It is the point of view of primitive man, crude, naive, emphatic in his perception of the obvious, but unskilled as yet in drawing finer distinctions or in appreciating degrees and shades of beauty, which reveals itself in this attitude . ³⁾

Looking at German medieval literature as a whole one cannot but conclude that it is of little importance as far as the subject of this investigation is concerned . The authors do not display any marked interest in the sea and their treatment of it is not such as to make a strong appeal to the modern reader. It thus presents a striking contrast to early English and Scandinavian literature, the preoccupation of whose poets with the ocean is one of the commonplaces of literary history .

1) Trist., quoted Koch, p. 37 .

2) Koch, p. 36 .

3) cf. E. Haackh: D. Naturbetrachtung bei d. m. h. d. Lyrikern (Lpzg., n. a.) Auffallend geringfügig ist das Verständnis für die Schönheit des Waldes u. des Wassers bei dem mittelalterlichen Dichter.

Part II.

EARLIER NEW HIGH GERMAN LITERATURE .

Earlier New High German Literature .

The student of sea poetry may pass over quickly the centuries which separate the end of the Middle Ages from the beginnings of modern German classical literature . The age of the Reformation offers nothing that will fall within the limits of our definition while in the Opitzian Renaissance also the sea hardly figures except by way of metaphor or simile . The frequently quoted lines of Fr. v. Spee beginning :

Das wilde Meer nun brauset und wütet ungestüm ,
which have been cited in proof of a special interest taken by the author in the sea ¹⁾, also come under this category , forming part, as they do , of a hymn ; Paul Fleming , a traveller whose voyages took him from the interior of Russia and the Black Sea to Baltic and Northern waters , complains that in life's ocean his frail bark is tossed

...wie auf den rauhen Gassen

Des bösen Ozeans ein schwacher Nachen wankt

Der keinen Bootsknecht hat .. (D.N.L., vol. 28, p. 18)

but does not appear to have been directly inspired by the sea ²⁾ except in one poem which contains a description of a friend's

1) Biese: Naturgefühl im M.A., p. 277 .

2) The poet's account of his own tossing in the Caspian Sea, however (25 Nov. 1636) also contains a few marine details pictured in the same language as those above (Lapenberg's edition, vol. I, p. 175).

shipwreck :

Mich dünkt ich höre noch den Zorn der tollen Wellen,

Den Grimm der wilden Flut, dass mir die Ohren gellen..

The fury of the gale, the height ('Kajüten hoch und mehr') of the angry waves, the drifting of the dismasted vessel and its final loss on the cliffs of one of the Finnish islands are described in vigorous, to some extent even in technical language ('so viel Striche nach Norden ; Meisan ; Focke ; Kiel ; Planken) which in places suggests a conscious attempt at realism, as in the account of the foundering (das Rohr sprang plötzlich ab, ...der Kiel ging mors entzwei, die Planken huben sich mit Zittern an zu splintern') ; we are informed, however, that this description was based on the account given by the sufferers themselves and it is noteworthy that the 'Hirtenchor' composed to celebrate their return only contains one reference to 'die erzürnte See' .

'Die Welt ist wie das Meer' , explains Fr.v.Logau in one of his epigrams and man's, or the Church's, estate in life is frequently described in the form of a marine simile ; it is :

Wie ein Schiff, das weder Rat

Noch Kompass noch Ruder hat .

The Church is 'the Christian's anchor' ; a pious woman is compared to

Ein Schifflein auf dem Meer,

Wann dieses kommt, so kommt's nicht leer .¹⁾

Opitz in particular shows a marked fondness for marine allusions ('da binde nur sein Schiff der Tugend Anker an '²⁾) and sometimes elaborates them, e.g. :

Wer wollte den Patron nicht in der See ertränken,

Der sich, wann Sturmwind kommt, mit Fleisse durfte lenken

Auf Stein und Klippen zu, zu kriegen das Geschrei

Wie sehr bescheiden er im Schiffregieren sei ?³⁾

Even the Hamletian 'sea of trouble' occurs .

It is significant that to Fleming as well as to his contemporaries, as to their M.H.G. predecessors, it is first of all the terrible aspect of the sea, its waves, gales and shipwrecks, that presents itself ; 'die wilde See', 'die wüste See', 'die tollen Wellen', are among the most common appellations applied to it . We look in vain, however, for anything like a lengthy or detailed description or apostrophe to it . Haller's word painting of the Alps and of Alpine scenery , much admired and influential as it was, would appear to have inspired no

1) Paul Gerhardt, D.N.L., vol. 31, p. 194.

2) D.N.L., vol. 27, p. 291.

3) ibid., p. 300.

imitator to undertake a similar treatment of the sea coast ; even ^{to} the Hamburger Brockes it seems to have been little more than a symbol of infinity , although he is not blind to the ~~sp~~ sparkle of the sun upon its waves , and the roaring of the ocean, its foaming breakers piling themselves up like steep rocks to charge the shore , is not forgotten in his description of the havoc wrought by a thunderstorm . 'Hamburg's Handlung und Gewinn' ¹⁾ (!) he styles it in another place . Characteristically too for him also 'des Meeres Breite' and 'ungeheure Weite' seem 'fast entsetzlich anzuschauen' ²⁾ . It is not until we reach the latter half of the eighteenth century that poetry inspired by love of the sea is to be met with and its first representative is Graf Friedrich Leopold Stolberg whose delight in the sea bursts out in his works with an emphasis not to be mistaken by the most casual reader :

Du heiliges und weites Meer
Wie ist dein Anblick mir so hehr !
Sei mir im frühen Strahl gegrüsst
Der zitternd deine Lippen küsst ! ³⁾

The poem from which the last-quoted lines are taken is a direct apostrophe to the sea ('An das Meer') and a number of others,

1) D.N.L., vol. 39, p. 300 .

2) *ibid.*, p. 319 .

3) Stolberg, Werke, vol. I

e.g. 'Badelied; zu singen im Sunde', 'Kain am Ufer des Meeres', 'Grabschrift eines Fischers' , 'Lied auf dem Wasser zu singen', already indicate by their titles the prominent part played by the water in their author's life, while 'Die Meere' reminds us that the poet, by virtue of his Danish-Holstein descent and upbringing, was well acquainted with both North Sea and Baltic and could distinguish between the charms of each :

Ich kenne dein Rauschen,
Deiner Wogen Sirenengesang (addressing the Baltic),
but : Lauter als du
Donnert die Nordsee
Stärker und freier als du
Tanzet sie eigenen Tanz ...

'Die Nympe' is his name for the Baltic ,while her rival is 'die Göttin' , 'Nordmeer' , ' Weltmeer, Göttin, Unendliche'.

He holds himself fortunate in that he has looked on the sea 'viel tausendmal' ; the sound of its waves which have so often cooled and refreshed him is a cradle song for the tired earth . The poet,too is inspired by it :

Der Geist des Herrn den Dichter zeugt...
Auf deiner Wogen blauem Schoss
Wiegt seine Phantasie sich gross .

It is no doubt correct to say that, as Miss Richardson has
1) Stolb. Werke, I, p. 176 .
2) ibid., I, ('An das Meer')
3) Mod. Language Rev., vol. XVIII, No 3, p. 323 .

pointed out , 'Ossianic effects take the place of local colouring and render his presentation unrealistic. ' One of his best sea pieces ('Hellebek') actually conjures up the Macpherson atmosphere in so many words :

Nun umschwebten uns Bilder der Vorzeit, die Leier von Selma
 "Tonte um uns, um uns die liebliche Stimme von Kona
 while it seems legitimate to guess at the same source for the origin of e.g. a stanza like the eighth in 'Das Meer' :

Der blinde Sanger stand am Meer,
 Die Wogen rauschten um ihn her,
 Und Riesentaten goldner Zeit
 Umrauschten ihn im Feierkleid ...

His 'Badelied, zu singen im Sunde'²⁾, again, with its references to 'nymphs' , 'Titan' , and 'Luna' , and its

O rühmliche Wonne,
 Mit Mond und mit Sonne

Zu baden im Meer ! , would be an appropriate accompaniment to a plunge into any sea anywhere , nor does internal evidence avail to determine the scene of the 'Winterlied'³⁾ : 'Das Meer, gepanzert weiss und hart', or the home of the dead fisherman : 'am krummen Gestade des Meeres'⁴⁾.

1) Stolb. Werke, I, p. 135 .

2) ibid., I, p. 161 .

3) ibid., I, p. 153 .

4) ibid., I, p. 297 .

It was the sea an sich , 'das geistererhebende Weltmeer' , which was the object of his love , and as the description of an Ossianic hero or heroine is scarce complete without a reference to the sea with its 'foam-headed billows' which murmurs at their side or roars against the 'sea-beat rock' so it is 'der Wogen Klang' (Am Meer'), 'das Wogengeräusch des heiligen Meeres' ('Hellebek') which plays the most prominent part in Stolberg's descriptions . Thus in 'Hellebek' he introduces himself to us 'einsam wallend am Ufer des wogengeräuschenden Meeres, in der Fluten Geräusch' . He depicts the blind minstrel standing on the shore , 'die Wogen rauschten um ihn her' . It is by means of the louder thunder of its waves that he distinguishes the roar of the North Sea from the 'Sirenengesang' of the Baltic . The Belt :

... staunt und „zürnt und hebt
Donnernde, schaumende Wogen

when she hears the poet singing his Fatherland, but he is not disheartened by the 'scheltende Flut, die tiefe, die Stur-mende' , for : 'mitten im kreisenden Strudel sänge Stolberg sein Vaterland'¹⁾ .

More than this, however, he is the first of all the German poets hitherto quoted to paint the colour of the sea ; having realised that waves may be 'blue' ('Freiheitsgesang'²⁾ , again:

1) Stolb. Werke, I, p. 53 .

2) ibid., p. 87 .

'auf deiner Wogen blauem Schoss'), 'purple' (Hellebek, Badelied), 'white' (Die Meere), or even 'black' (I, p.3) . He has an eye for colour effects :

Und es tanzten die rötlichen Gipfel auf Wogen des Nordmeers,
Heller strahlte der Sund, vom steigenden Monde beschienen.

His advance in fact on his predecessors--in so far as these can be called sea poets at all --consists largely in this that he was the first to perceive the sea with his senses (at least of ear and eye) , to paint it from the object, instead of visualising it by means of his imagination . The poets of the Rügen school -- Kosegarten, Lappe, Wilhelm Müller, the immediate predecessor and to some extent model of Heine --followed in his footsteps , excelling him, however, in regard of precision of local colouring, the lack of which in Stolberg has already been remarked upon .

The all but complete absence of sea literature in the works of the leading poets of the German classical era and of the early Romanticists is one of those facts which the historian of literature, if he be wise, will content himself with registering without attempting an explanation . Goethe became acquainted with the Mediterranean during his travels in Italy and several

1) Again, possibly, under the influence of Macpherson, who speaks of 'the sable shore' , 'the foamy wave' , besides employing obvious locutions like 'the blue distance of the deep'. (Fragments, IV, XIII, VI).

passages in his later works, such as the fragment 'Nausikaa', the opening lines of 'Alexis und Dora', the description of the cave of Thetis in 'Die Befreiung des Prometheus', the archangels' song in Faust (Prologue) and Faust's vision (I, p. 29) have been held to testify to the strength of the impression made on him by the coast scenery of Southern Italy¹⁾. It is only rarely, however, that we find him introducing the sea in a more deliberate manner. It figures thus in the two short lyrics 'Meeresstille' and 'Glückliche Fahrt' with their cunning manipulation of rhythmic effects (trochees; dactyli and trochees) suggesting first the deep silence of a calm sea (M.), then the rapid motion of a vessel after the wind has sprung up; in the final scene of the 'Classische Walpurgisnacht' (Faust II, Act II) as well as in several other passages in the Second Part of Faust, notably Act IV, p. 261 and Act V, p. 283 passim. Mention must also be made of two allegories (written before the visit to Italy), viz. 'Seefahrt' (1776) and the description of the mountain torrent's union with 'the old father, the eternal ocean', in 'Mahomet's Gesang' (1772?). According to O. Harnack²⁾ Goethe's original conception of the sea as something to be feared ('eine rein unheimliche Macht, von der Mensch gern wieder zum Lande zurückkehrt') which appears with sufficient clearness in the two

1) cf. O. Harnack: Hochgebirgs- u. Meerespoesie bei Goethe (Aufsätze u. Vorträge, Tübingen, 1911), p. 99 et seq.

first-named poems (M. and G.F.) was replaced by a better understanding of and even love for, the ocean, i.e. the Mediterranean, after in his stay in Sicily. Thales' apostrophe to the ocean, the creator and preserver of all life (Faust II, Act II, p. 217) would seem to confirm this view, although other passages in the same play suggest that for Goethe even in his old age there was still something vaguely disturbing, almost challenging, in the thought of 'das hohe Meer' :

Mein Auge war aufs hohe Meer gezogen ;
 Es schwoll empor, sich in sich selbst zu türmen,
 Dann liess es nach und schüttelte die Wogen,
 Des flachen Ufers Breite zu bestürmen.
 Und das verdross mich ; wie der Übermut
 Den freien Geist, der alle Rechte schätzt,
 Durch leidenschaftlich^h aufgeregtes Blut
 Ins Missbehagen des Gefühls versetzt .

.....

Sie schleicht heran an abertausend Enden,
 Unfruchtbar selbst, Unfruchtbarkeit zu spenden ;
 Nun schwillt's und wächst und rollt und überzieht
 Der wüsten Strecke widerlich Gebiet .

.....

Das herrische Meer vom Ufer auszuschliessen,
 Der feuchten Breite Grenzen zu verengen.... (Faust II,
 Act IV, p. 261-2)

becomes Faust's last ambition . An allegory, -- but it scarcely suggests the enthusiasm for the sea ('Meeresbegeisterung') attributed to his creator by Harnack . The latter in fact admits: 'Jedenfalls wird man kaum, wenn von Sängern des Meeres... die Rede ist, zuerst an Goethe denken.'²⁾

Schiller too hardly concerns us in this connection, although marine metaphors and similes (cfm e.g. 'Erwartung und Erfüllung', 'Der Epische Hexameter') are not absent in his works and the sea affords the setting for several of his poems and ballads , : 'Hero und Leander', 'Die unüberwindliche Flotte', and (to some extent) 'Der Ring des Polykrates' . His rendering of the Aeneid ('Der Sturm auf dem Tyrrhener Meer', 'Die Zerstörung von Troja' , 'Dido') are all but word for word translations from Vergil, and occasional liberties which he takes with his original, rendering e.g. 'submersas obrue puppes' by 'begrabe die sinkenden Masten' , or filling up his lines with an epithet not to be found in the Latin ('ad litora' = 'hinan an die hallenden Ufer' , 'submergere ponto' = 'im

1) *ibid.*, p. 101 . 2) *ibid.*, p. 103 ; cf. Luise Meyer: Die Entwicklung des Naturgefühls bei Goethe (Münster, 1906), quoted, Koch, p. 98 : Goethe hat in seinen Gedichten den reichen Stimmungsgehalt des wechselnden Elements nicht voll erschlossen .

3) cf. *Vix e conspectu Siculae telluris in altum
 vela dabant laeti et spumas salis aere ruebant* =

Kaum entschwangen sie sich der Schau an Siziliens Küsten,
 Freudejauchzend, empor in die Höhe mit rollenden Segeln,
 Und durchschnitten mit ehernen Stacheln die schäumende Salzflut.

wogichten Abgrund ersaufen') are obviously dictated by the exigencies of metre and rhythm . We may also disregard 'Der Taucher' with its strange mixture of rockfish, hammerfish, and shark ('der gefräßige Hai, des Meeres Hyäne') disporting themselves in a whirlpool painted from the memories of a mountain torrent¹⁾ . In 'Die Unüberwindliche Flotte' again 'die erschrockenen Wellen' are barely mentioned ; the Hellespont in 'Hero und Leander' with its host of dolphins ('der Tethys buntes Heer'), the home of Helle and Leucothea, wears the unmistakable features of the Homeric ocean .

Herder's appreciation of the beauty of Italian coast scenery ('Am Meer bei Neapel') has been noted by Biese²⁾ ; his references to the sea, however, are too scanty to come into consideration here .

In Wieland's works too the sea only appears as a source of metaphors and similes, which are sometimes elaborated in the manner of Opitz , e.g. :

Wie dort die schwarze See ein irrend Schiff durchpflügt³⁾
 Auf der ein grau Gebirg verdickter Wolken liegt,
 Der brausende Aeol bläht falsche Segel auf
 Keinweisendes Gestirn bestimmt den blinden Lauf³⁾ ,

or :

Schiller (München, 1909)

1) K. Berger, vol. II, p. 350 .

2) Biese: Naturgefühl im M.A., p. 369 ,

3) Wieland, Werke, vol. I, p. 160 ,

4) ibid., p. 148 .

Wie wenn aus tobenden Meeren
 Welche ein brüllender Orkan mit Erde und Himmel vermischt,
 Der Beherrscher der Wellen sein königlich Antlitz hervorhebt
 Also verliert sich der Sturmwind in ein besänftigtes Säuseln.

A. von Schlegel's versification of the dolphin ride of 'Arion' is to be found in every German Lesebuch, but it is the moral of the tale rather than its briefly suggested marine setting which recommends it to the scholastic anthologist. The same applied to the like-named poem by Ludwig Tieck whose 'blaue Wunder' and 'Tritonen grun' , 'die hüpfend um den Sanger ziehn' serve only to build up an unmistakeable märchen localised at sea .

It is a small group of minor poets, the 'Rügen school' already alluded to ,which follows in Stolberg's footsteps . G.L.Kosegarten, a great part of whose life was spent on the island of Rügen, is disposed of by Miss Richardson in a few lines and it is particularly stated that 'we search his poems in vain for a more realistic presentation of the sea than that contained in the line 'Wie brüllt das Meer ! Wie saust der Wald ! ' Additional passages could however be cited which furnish undeniable proof that the author of 'Jukunde' possessed eyes to see the foam topped breakers crashing

against Rügen's iron cliffs as well as ears for 'die Posaune des Meeres'¹⁾, 'das Rauschen der See und der Brandung dumpfes Geläut'²⁾; witness the third eclogue of the above mentioned poem :

Herrlich zu schaun war rings der Golf und der Strand und die
 Voll das geraumige Becken des Golfs in jeder Umfrung,^{Dünen}
 Dann fernher aus dem Belt und dem Sund in das Becken des Golfes
 "Walzte des Ostwinds Kraft die unendliche Fülle des Meeres
 Welches sich donnernd brach am ehernen Riff, dass die Brandung
 "Übersich schlagend in Schaum zergohr und der Dampf in die Luft
 "Über der gährenden Tiefe, dem weitaufklaffenden Abgrund stob.
 Rollten die Magdlein dahin auf dem unterhöhlten Abhang.³⁾

One of his shorter poems also ('Der Rugard') contains a vivid description of the Rügen seas before and during a winter gale:

Am hohen Ufer schwirrt kein Laut ;
 Kein Vogel streift, es schweift kein Wild ;
 Des Lebens Pulsschlag starrt .

Da plötzlich dumpfaufdonnernd kracht
 Das meilenweit gespaltne Meer,
 Im dicken Brodem braun'

Sich schwere Wetter. Horch, wie gährt
 Wie saust es in dem schwarzen Schwall !

1) K. Dichtungen, vol II, p. 132 .

2) ibid., p. 137 .

3) ibid., p. 179 .

Des Sturmes Kraft erwacht ¹⁾

One cannot but regret that this poet, whose knowledge, and, we may venture to say, love of the sea were not less than Stolberg's, ²⁾ has given us so little in this strain. Karl Lappe, for some time a tutor in Kosegarten's family, has gone beyond his patron both as regards the amount and variety of his sea poetry and in 'reproducing the characteristics of the Rügen coast by the introduction of local colour and detail' ³⁾. His realism and his philosophical conception of the sea, in respect of which he is a forerunner and probably an immediate model of Heine, have already been analyzed in full by Miss Richardson, ³⁾ who has also devoted careful study to the sea poetry of the third member of the Pommeranian group, Wilhelm Müller. 'Both these poets', she concludes, 'aimed at presenting the sea in a realistic way, however varying the measure of their success. 'Lappe's poems, however, seem to her 'typical products of the eighteenth century, while Müller's are definitely romantic.' ⁴⁾

Several additional points (not dealt with by Miss Richardson) connected with the work of Lappe and Müller are worth stressing. Karl Lappe is the first of all the poets hitherto discussed to address complete poems to a ship ('Das Schiff'), describing the launching of a frigate) and to sailors. True he still remains

1) K. Dichtungen, vol. VIII, p. 99.

2) cf. H. Franck: G. L. K., ein Lebensbild, p. 44: ... das Meer, dessen Schönheit Kosegarten... so sehr liebte

3) Mod. Language Rev., vol. XVIII, No 3, p. 325.

4) ibid., p. 326.

a son of his century in giving his description in general rather than particular terms ; his reference e.g. to the shipwrights ('seiner Kindheit Pfleger') standing

weit um die Wiege wo geboren

Das ragende Titanenkind ¹⁾

is couched in elaborately non-technical language, as are his names for the vessel itself : 'ein Ross Neptuns' , 'schlanke Wellentänzerin' , 'du Bekränzte, du Geschmückte' , 'du Hoffnungstrunkene, Beglückte' , 'königlicher Bau' , 'Jubelbraut' , 'Braut des Meeres' . The destiny in store for the ship is described :

Auf ödem Meere sollst du schweifen

Wirf froh des Ankers Eisenzahn ;

but the author writes throughout as a landsman, not as a sailor. His 'Schifferlied' ²⁾ too , in which 'der wackere Schiffer, mit Stürmen vertraut' glorifies his calling and the 'merry battle' with gale and flood would not be read without a smile by a professional seaman , who would probably be hard put to it to decide whether these 'mariners' singing and rowing 'im Takte der Lieder' are to be imagined pursuing their calling on the high seas or within sight of the shore . To Lappe however belongs the credit of having been the first German to essay a poem in the manner of 'The Merchantmen' , as Wilhelm Müller's 'Lieder aus dem Meerbusen von Salerno' , 'trivial and superficial' as

1) Lappe, Gedichte, p.16 .

2) ibid. p.84 .

they undoubtedly are , were to be succeeded by a long chain of Italian shore poems the composition of which by German poet-tourists came to be a standing convention in the nineteenth century . Notwithstanding their by no means despicable achievements, however, the Rugen poets have long ago retired to the obscurity of the reference library . It is their follower and immediate successor, Heinrich Heine, who heads the list of sea poets still known to a wider German public and in quality as well as quantity must be called Germany's first sea poet .

It should be unnecessary to explain why a fully detailed study of Heine's sea poetry and quotations illustrative of his style and subject matter are absent from these pages . The 'Nordseebilder' is one of those works a full knowledge of which may be taken for granted ; their merits and special characteristics have been set forth innumerable times . He gives us the North Sea in all its aspects : in the evening ('Abendämmerung' , 'Sonnenuntergang' , 'Gesang der Okeaniden' , 'Erklärung' , 'Untergang der Sonne'), at night ('Die Nacht am Strande' , 'Fragen') , in the sunshine ('Poseidon') , in a dead calm ('Meeresstille' , 'Frieden') , in a gale ('Sturm' , 'Gewitter') , seen from the shore ('Wir sassen am Fischerhause' ,

1) cf. E. Elster: H. Heine's Buch der Lieder, (Heidelberg, 1887), LX-LXIV .

'Das Meer erglänzte weit hinaus'), from shipboard ('Gewitter', 'Poseidon', 'Nachts in der Kajüte'), in port ('Im Hafen'). The poet-wanderer enjoying the favours of a comely fisher girl ('Die Nacht am Strande'), the passenger about to tempt the ocean ('Poseidon'), seeing visions in the mirror-like water ('Seegespenst') or tossing on the high seas ('Der Sturm spielt auf zum Tanze') the seaman staring at the compass during a thunderstorm ('Gewitter'), the cabin boy cowering before a brutal captain ('Meeresstille'), the lifeless corpse flung ashore by the waves after a shipwreck ('Der Schiffbrüchige'), even the seasick landsman in his misery ('Seekrankheit') ---- all have their place in one or another of the poems, nor must the grim tale of 'Das Sklavenschiff' ('Letzte Gedichte') be omitted in this connection. 'The spirit of the waters, their music, movement, force, and mysteriousness' has here been caught in a manner unapproached in the history of German poetry before him for power and expressiveness, intensely romantic though his conception of it is. 'He loves the sea like his own soul', 'wild' (I, 83, 146, 164, II, 52), 'wust' (I, 154), and 'ode' (I, 155, 157) although it is; 'Thalatta, Thalatta, Sei mir gegrüsst, du ewiges Meer' he exclaims in his ode to the sea entitled 'Meergruss' (I, 153) and expressions like 'das liebe, rettende Meer' (ibid.), 'das alte Meer' (I, 85), 'das ewige Meer'

1) J. Lees: The German Lyric, p. 159.

2) 'Norderney' (Heine, Sämtl. Werke, vol. V, p. 68)

(I,53) are no less eloquent of the attitude he adopts towards it . His sea pictures are more intensely charged with the spirit of the individual artist who drew them than any of those painted by his predecessors , it is not so much the North Sea, but the North Sea engaged in reflecting the moods of Heinrich Heine that is preserved in the 'Nordseebilder' . Very largely original too , although not altogether, it is true, uninfluenced by the work of his forerunners, notably Müller and Lappe¹⁾, is his technique, his unrhymed irregular verse²⁾, his 'skill in suiting the rhythm to the movement of the waves, the tossing of the ship, the sinking and rising of his own emotions'³⁾, his attributes and compound adjectives⁴⁾ such as 'wiegenliedheimlich' (I,141), 'stillverderbliche Fläche' (I,151), 'Meer-überflattern-de...Seewasser-saufende...thranigtes Robbenfleisch-fressende Vogel' (II,158), 'weissgekräuselte Wellen' (I,163), and his comparisons, e.g. of the waves to 'dark green horses with silver manes' (I,163), 'flocks of sheep' (I,156), 'mountains of water' (I,85), 'sea water falls' (I,164) and of his ship to 'a rearing war horse' (ibid.). The ever-changing colour effects of sea and sky do not escape him any more than they did Stolberg: 'der Mond überstrahlt das graue Meer mit goldnem Glanze' (I,84, cf. I,159,156, II,26), the waves are white (I,84,85,139,141, etc), silvery grey (I,140), green (I,148), dark (II,22,23), black (I,164)

- 1) Miss Richardson, Mod. Language Rev., vol. XVIII, NO 3, p. 325 et seq.
 2) Elster, CI .
 3) J. Lees, The German Lyric, p. 159 .
 4) Elster, XCVIII-C .
 5) ibid., XC-XCIV .

or reddened by the sun (I,139,153), the dunes are 'white'(I,143), a 'grass -yellow moon' peers through 'violet clouds' (I,158), white clouds pass along the light blue,starless sky (I,159).

He fully equals Kosegarten, moreover, in the number and emphasis of his sound pictures ;witness his description of the roar of the angry waters in a gale (I,85,144,164), the howling of the winds (I,85,141,147,155), the 'Flüstern und Pfeifen,Lachen,Murmeln,Seufzen und Sausen,dazwischen ein wiegenliedheimliches Singen' of the waves rippling against the shore in the evening (I,139,156,158,162) and the 'shrilling of the gulls' (I,85,158). Realism too is by no means absent,as in his description of the fisher girl's hut in 'Die Nacht am Strande' , although the number of actual technical terms used by him (Mastbaum,Steuer,Kajüte,Boussole,Leuchtturm) is very small . His knowledge of ships and matters nautical ,like Fleming's (vide supra,p.7) was merely that of an intelligent passenger ; a landsman moreover (with a University degree) and a poet . To such a one the sea would of necessity suggest thoughts of Poseidon (I,143), Thetis,the daughters of Oceanus (cf.'Der Gesang der Okeaniden') , Xenophon's Ten Thousand (I,153) and 'age-old sagas of Norway' (I,141) ,as well as the strangely haunting picture, 'Ossianic'and 'Romantic' at

the same time, of the fair pale lady in her castle by the Scottish shore striking her harp and sending her mysterious song "über das weite stürmende Meer" (I,147-48). He fully appreciates the effectiveness of the sea as a picturesque setting for a story or a ballad ; witness e.g. his poems 'Childe Harold' (II,65), 'Die Nixen' (II,73), and 'König Harald Harfagar' (II,80). On occasion it must even help him to produce a comic effect , ('Das Sklavenschiff', III,173 ; 'Unsere Marine', II,109) . The last-named poem is particularly noteworthy as being the first in literature which has for its theme the creation of a German navy , although in this case the author still refuses to take the proposal seriously,-- a significant fact . Heinrich Heine, to put it briefly, loved the sea, in all its moods and rages, and painted it with a skill of which it is perhaps the highest praise to say that it equalled his passion ; sometimes, although comparatively rarely, he also vouchsafes us a casual sketch of the vessel that carried him and of the men who steered her ; but there is no evidence to suggest that he ever gave a thought to the port for which she was bound, the cargo she carried, or the flag she flew .

Part III.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER .

Introduction.

There has been a certain amount of doubt as to the question whether Heine was the first German sea poet . There can be none that he was not the last . The sea, the sea shore, ships, sailors, and sea fights are themes which recur in the poetical literature of the nineteenth century with almost monotonous regularity . The North German and Mediterranean coasts in particular assume a prominence which seems calculated to compensate them for centuries of neglect while sea ballads -- or, to be more exact, ballads with a marine setting, such as Strachwitz's viking poems or Fontane's 'Jean Bart' -- become too numerous to be counted . The 'new course' too and the naval aspirations of post-Bismarckian Germany have given rise to a flood of 'grand fleet' literature and at long last turned the attention of German verse writers to the professional sailor and the man-of-war's man . Even inland poets, such as the Westphalian Droste-Hülshoff and the Swiss Gottfried Keller, stud their pages with nautical metaphors , as though the sea, which perhaps they never saw , could not but form part of the field of vision of an educated modern German . With such a superabundance of material detailed treatment of every writer becomes impossible . A convenient survey, however, may be obtained by dividing our material into several sections as

follows :

- I. Poetry descriptive of the sea and of the sea shore (1800-48)
- II. " " " " " " " " (1848-80)
- III. " " " " " " " " (1880-
to-day)
- IV. Ballads and verse tales with a marine setting .
- V. Patriotic ('grand fleet') verse.
- VI. The sea in modern Low German poetry .

In the work of those German poets whose subject matter does not entitle them to a place in one of the ~~se~~ divisions just given marine metaphors occur most frequently on the pages of Annette von Droste-Hülshoff , Friedrich Rückert , and Gottfried Keller . The first-named in particular appears almost to have been obsessed by a longing for the sea and for a sailor's life , an obsession which takes shape in definite words in the wistful soliloquy uttered (or supposed to be uttered) while the poetess is watching the waves from the top of a tower :

O springen möcht' ich hinein alsbald,
 Recht in die tobende Meute (i.e. the waves)
 Und jagen durch den korallenenen Wald
 Das Walross, die lustige Beute ! ('Am Turm',)

and again (ibid.) :

O sitzen möcht' ich im kämpfenden Schiff,
 Das Steuerruder ergreifen,
 Und zischend über das brandende Riff
 Wie eine Seemöve streifen .

References to the sea , 'die blaue Flut' (I, 47), 'das tiefe Meer' (III, 40), occur over and over again in her works, even in places where one would least expect them, as in the collection of religious poetry entitled 'Das geistliche Jahr' :

Da Jesus sich tut beugen
 Ins tiefe Meer sich neigen
 Wohl Inseln diesem Gruss (III,40) ;
 In der Gedanken "öden Hafen
 Der Zweifel seine Flagge trägt ... (III,63).

Sometimes the professional sailor must supply the poetess with an elaborate metaphor, e.g.

Und wie das Schiff in wüster See
 Vertrauend auf des Pharus' Nah
 Mag unser Kahn zum Hafen treiben ,

she exclaims (III,67), and again she points out , in language almost comical in its deliberate attempt at realism, how

.. mancher, wie zum starken Mast
 Geschaffen , in der Zeit Gefahr
 Die Glaubenssegel hat gebrasst (!)
in Zweifels wüstem Meer . (III,119).

The cross is 'ein sicheres Schiff...in grosser Not' (III,134).

She bids the reader bethink himself of the sea shore at night the better to visualise the barren desolation of a Westphalian moor :

...doch bei Nacht
 Wohl standest du am Meere je

Und hörtest wie der Wellenschlag
 Sich wühlend am Gestade brach ?
 Ein wüstes Untier ist die See
 Wenn schwarzer als die Dunkelheit
 Hascht Wog' auf Woge nach dem Strand :
 Doch schauriger die Heide weit ... (II,198).

The poem from which the last passage is taken is studded through and through with marine allusions and similes ; a general is like 'ein Pharus in erzürnter See' (II,176) ; another time he stands :

...So ruhig wie ein Felsenriff

An dem sich schzend reibt das Schiff. (II,213).

Count Tilly's eye is clear but grey like that of a shark :

So durch die Welle blitzt der Hai .. (II,203) ;

an army is drawn up 'So ruhig wie ein schlafend Meer' (II,221) ;
 the rain pours down ...eine Flut

Wie übers Wrack sich schäumend legt..;

the survivors after a battle are compared to 'helpless wrecks'.

In many other poems too the sea is referred to ; e.g. (I,98):

Die Luft...ein siedend Meer ;

(I,58): Denn wie trotzig sich die Düne

Mag am flachen Strande heben

Fühlt ich stark mich wie ein Hüne .

1) cf : Die See, das wüste Getier
 Das Haie speit und Piraten . (I,246)

A moor in the heat of summer rocks like a ship :

Die weite Ebene schaukelt wie ein Schiff,
Hindurch der Kiebitz schrillt, wie Halcyonen
Wehklagend ziehen um das Riff (I. 89.),

a comparison which is worked out in detail in the poem entitled
'Die Steppe' (I. 97).

Diese Tange entfischt ich der See
Aus Muschelgescherbe und Kiese...

we read in the autobiographical piece 'Meine Sträusse' (I. 196)
a passage which tells its own tale. It is noteworthy, however,
that with all her dreams of the ocean and the wild ocean waves
Annette has made no attempt to compose what might be called in
the real sense of the word a sea poem. The pathetic outburst
entitled 'Am Turme' at least can hardly be cited in this connectio
any more than the mock-serious 'Der Strandwächter am deutschen
Meere'; while the marine setting of her famous ballad 'Vergel-
tung' is only cursorily sketched; the selfishness and death
of 'the black-haired passenger' being obviously the most important
part of the story. The narrative poem 'Die Schwestern' again
would seem to be partly localised in a sea port, but the local
colour is of the slightest:

Am Hafendamm geht eine Frau...

....der Schiffspatron

Sieht "über die Planke sie kommen..(etc.).
I. 307.

The works of Friedrich Rückert , Gottfried Keller , and Eichendorff yield a number of marine metaphors, e.g.

Er fuhr auf schwankem Kahne

Im Lebensozeane... (Rückert, I, 470) ;

'das Meer der Thränen' (ibid., I, 361) ;

Liebe, die Meerfrau,

Die hat viel Perlen klar.. (ibid., I, 572) ;

(Erde) .du gedrangtes Meer

Unzähliger Gräberwagen... (Keller, I, 93) ;

O war mein Herz das tiefe Meer

Und seine Feinde die Schiffe.. (ibid., I, 275),

metaphors which are sometimes worked out in detail (cf. 'Die Nachtfahrer' (Keller, I, 25) ; 'Recht im Unglück' (Keller, II, 119); 'Auf offener See' (Eichendorff, 45) ; 'In der Nacht' (ibid., 263) poems with a nautical setting, however, are few and negligible.

Chapter I.

Poetry descriptive of the sea and of the sea shore(1800-48)

A priori considerations would justify the supposition that one of the foremost places in this study was likely to be occupied by Adalbert von Chamisso . His voyage round the world (1815-19) caused him to spend a longer time on ship-board than has probably fallen to the lot of any other German poet before or since ; we know moreover that in addition to this he paid repeated visits to the North Sea and Baltic coasts (Heligoland, Greifswald, and Rügen) . Strangely enough, however, the sea and ships are almost totally absent from his pages . He admired the scenery of Stubbenkammer and Ankona,²⁾ yet his poem 'Die Jungfrau von Stubbenkammer' contains next to no local colour :

Ich trank in schnellen Zügen
 Das Leben und den Tod
 Beim Königsstuhl auf Rügen
 Am Strand im Morgenrot .

.....

Ich kam am frühen Morgen
 Nachsinnend einsam her
 Und lauscht dem Wellenschlage

1) C. Werke, XXXVI, LXXXIII, LXXXVIII .

2) 'Stubbenkammer und Ankona sind auch einem Weltumsegler noch schön' (letter to his wife, quoted ibid., p. 101)

Und schaute übers Meer . (C.Werke,p.101)

'Die Verbannten' with its brief description of the Siberian coast at the mouth of the Lena river can hardly be adduced in this connection, as it purports to be a translation from the Russian . Even 'Salas y Gomez' (vide infra, chap. IV) contains little actual description . Chamisso, it is evident, had no desire to compete with the author of the 'Nordseebilder'. The sea, one feels tempted to guess, can have made little impression on him . It receives fuller treatment, however, in some of his contemporaries and successors .

August Graf von Platen for instance deserves consideration by virtue of certain of his Italian poems : 'Einladung nach Sorrent', 'Die Fischer auf Capri', 'Bilder Neapels', 'Amalfi', 'Einladung nach der Insel Palmaria', 'Das Fischer-mädchen im Burano', 'Skylia und der Reisende' . He sings the glories of Venice and of the Campanian coast, glories among which of course the blue Mediterranean with its islets and grottoes must figure, side by side with lagoons, palaces, lazzaroni, and other typically Southern figures ; Naples lies:

Im Halbzirkel umher, an dem lachenden Golf entlang,

Unabsehlich benetzt von dem laulichen Wogenschwail (III,
142);

crowds gather on the mole,

..... wo hingestreckt

sonnt die ^{nackenden} ~~braunlichen~~ Glieder der ["]bräunliche Lazzaron.

.....

Schiffe kommen und gehn, es erklettern den höchsten Mast
Flugs Matrosen, es ladet die Barke dich ein zur Fahrt ;
at night fishermen's torches light up the golden sea ; in
short, it is a place to see and to die in :

.. hier lerne geniessen, und dann, o Beglückter, stirb !

A recognisable description, to which must be added, however,
that it fills scarcely half a dozen lines out of a total of
110 .('Bilder Neapel's ', IV, 141 passim). The poem entitled
'Amalfi' too mentions rather than elaborates ...

Nach Süden die Fläche der Salzflut,

Wenn sie smaragdgrün["] liegt um zackige Klippen und anwogt.

Similarly the poet's house, 'die kleine Villa halbversteckt',
and the historical associations that cling around the spot,
not 'des salzigen Bades Kühlungen', represent the real subjects
of the 'Einladung nach der Insel Palmaria' , and the fisher
girl of Burano has a good deal more to say about her
holidays by the side of her lover than about her work :

"
Schön wohl ist es zu fischen am Abende, wann die Lagune
Blitzt, und das schimmernde Netz von hängendem Meergras funkelt ,
Jegliche Masche wie Gold und die zappelnden Fische vergoldet;
Aber ich liebe vor Allem den Festtag, wann du daheimbleibst.

The conversation between Skylla and the traveller is no more
than an amusing jeu d'esprit . Still less material is to be
culled from the group of sonnets entitled 'Venedig', e.g.

Mein Auge liess das hohe Meer zurücke,
Als aus der Flut Palladios Tempel stiegen,
An deren Staffeln sich die Wellen schmiegen,
Die uns getragen ohne Falsch und Tücke . (II, 175)

and again :

Ich grüsse dort den Ozean, den blauen,
Und hier die Alpen, die im weiten Bogen
Auf die Laguneninseln niederschauen . (II, 177)

A few definitely descriptive touches appear in 'Die Einladung
nach Sorrent', with its picture of the refreshing breath of
the sea, sanfte Labung,

Die des Meeres Salzwoge dem Kühnen zuhaucht
Der an Felsvorsprüngen erlauscht besäumter

Brandungen Ankunft ,

of the soft sea bottom ('weichsandiger Wellengrund') and of grottoes

'Wo die rotblaue funkelnde See wie Purpur glänzt...' and in 'Die Fischer auf Capri', whose simple lives 'zwischen dem schroffen Geklüft und des Meeres anschwellender Salzflut', on a rough wave-beaten coast facing 'das ödere Meer, die wogende Wildnis' in a hut

'Bloss durch riesige Steine geschützt vor stürmischem Andrang,
Der über den Sand wegschüpft und die Schwelle benetzt ihr'

are painted by the poet with imagination and sympathy. Platen in fact was by no means insensible to the beauty of the sea and notwithstanding a significant allusion to the unpleasant after-effects of mal-de-mer in the first of his Venetian Sonnets appears to have enjoyed sea voyages :

"Schön und glanzreich ist des bewegten Meeres Wellenschlag, wann tobenden Lärmes es anbraust (IV, 79)

and again :

"Schön ist's ...
Anschau Städte der Menschen,
Stehn auf hohem Verdeck zu Schiff (IV, 73),

1) III, 176: Mit mir im Haupte trag ich aus den Wellen
Des Schiffes Schwindel noch und Missbehagen .

2) I, 327 : 'Das schönste an dieser Reise (a trip to Baiae with Kopisch) war überhaupt die Natur und das Meer mit allen seinen Farben'.

but he does not show himself greatly concerned to acquaint us with his feelings in this respect . The epithets which he applies to the sea are few and commonplace in character: 'das öde(re)Meer', 'die wogende Wildnis' , 'des Meeres anschwellende Salzflut' (IV,139), 'das goldne Meer' (IV,145), 'die Fläche der Salzflut, smaragdgrün' (IV,147), 'die rotblau dunkelnde See' (IV,57) ; his 'Matrosenlied' (II,61) and the poem entitled 'Fischerknabe' (II,59) are ~~two~~ poems pure and simple . Platen's impressions of nature, moreover, as has been pointed out by Koch, are wont to mingle with classical and historical reminiscences, the result being 'Reflexionspoesie'.

Thoughtful rather than descriptive too are the lines in which Platen's friend and fellow-traveller Kopisch expresses his 'Schwärmerei für Sorrent' :

Am Sorrent rauschet das Meer auf !

Noch hör' ich's rauschen durch meine Traume ..

Stets rauscht es und ruft : Wie verträumst du dein Leben?

Komm her und genieß was die Stunden dir geben.

His poem 'Sturm' (III,176) contains a vigorous description of a gale at sea :

Sturmgehobene Wasserberge

Platen, Sämtl. Werke (4788, Max Hesse)

1) I,331 : Für Platens ernste dichterische Betrachtungsweise, welche, ganz so wie später Graf Schack es getan hat, durch Naturgenuss durch die Belebung der mit dem jeweiligen Schauplatz verbundenen geschichtlichen Ereignisse erhöht u. vergeistigt, ist diese Ekloge (D.Fischer auf Capri) bezeichnend.

"
Schaumen auf
Stürzen nieder

.....

of a vessel tossing on the angry ocean, 'des Winden, den
Wogen ein leichtes Spiel ! ' -- and of the calm following
the storm when

die Winde wehen linde,
die Wellen sinken sanfttrauschend zur Fläche nieder
und schaukeln freudig der Sonne entgegen,

.....

des Schiffleins geretteter Kiel durchschneidet die Wogen
mit Rauschen, mit Murmeln, ein lustiges Tönen dem Steuermann.

There is nothing here to suggest, however, that this is not
purely a picture of the imagination, like the breezy
description of the sailor's friend and helper, 'Klabauter-
mann' (286) :

Der alles im Schiffe sich rühren heisst
Der überall, überall mit uns reist,
Mit dem Schiffscapitain flink trinkt und speist,
Beim Steuermann sitzt und wacht die Nacht,
Und im obersten Mast wenn das Wetter kracht .(etc.)

1) or a reminiscence of Heine ?

'At last a piece of realism calculated to voice the feelings of the professional sailor' , the reader feels tempted to exclaim, until his eye falls upon the last line : 'Kourage heisst unser Klabautermann' ; a descent into bathos of which only a rationalising landsman could be guilty . Some half dozen other poems with a marine setting come into consideration (vide infra, chap. IV) but they supply no additional material which would enable us to reconstruct the author's attitude towards the sea or to assign to him any but a subordinate place in the list of German poets whose works form the material of this study .

More consideration, as well as, it is safe to say, more praise, is due to another contemporary of Graf Platen, the unhappy Nikolaus Franz Niembsch von Strehlenau ('Nikolaus Lenau') . This poet had actually crossed the Atlantic (in his voyage to the United States , 1832-33) and subsequently published a small cycle of poems under the title 'Atlantica' ; others, like 'Die Seejungfrauen' , 'Der Schiffsjunge' , 'Meeresstille' , as well as certain passages in his 'Faust', may be regarded as the direct outcome of his wanderings 'auf dem hellen grenzenlosen Meere' ; the description of the cabin boy's death in 'Der Schiffsjunge' is based upon

1) cf. list, Werke, I, XXIV, note 2 .

2) ibid., I, p. 197, note .

an actual event which took place before Lenau's own eyes . He gives us, not the sea shore, but the high seas as seen from a 'deep water' ship ; we see the poet on deck on a bright breezy morning, scanning the horizon for a sight of land ('Seemorgen'), meditating sadly upon the great eternal grief of nature which she knows how to pour into him even 'hier auf der See' ('Meeresstille'), or staring at des Mondes und der Wellen Heimlichen Verkehre...

('Die Seejungfrauen') ‡

Faust and Mephistopheles pace the deck and philosophise ('Faust') ; the storm scene (ibid.), even the description of the bacchanal in the 'Schenke am Meeresstrande' (ibid.) owe much to Lenau's own experience. 'Der Schiffsjunge' above all, notwithstanding the most unsailor-like appellations given to the vessel's sails ('die höchsten Segel am stolzen Mast, der Luftefänger, der Wolkenraser, der Mondespflücker, der Sternengraser') is a magnificent piece of realism :

So fliegt, wie die Flut sich senkt und türmt,
Das Schiff die Wellen hinab, hinan,
Vom mächtigen Seitenwinde gefasst,
Mit tiefbordüber geneigtem Mast .

1) Werke, II, p. 187, note .

2) ibid., p. 198, note .

3) Werke, I, 197, note : Auf die Erfindung dieser Segelnamen tat sich Lenau etwas zu gute .

Es braust das Meer, es kracht und stöhnt["]
 Des belad'nen Fahrzeuges schwere Wucht
 Auf seiner rastlos eiligen Flucht ;
 Der Matrosen freudiges Hurra ! tönt["] .
 Der Steuermann am Ruder steht,
 Das Rad mit gewaltigen Armen drehet,
 Stets blickend scharf aufs zitternde Schwanken
 Der Boussole

Am Verdeck frisch auf und nieder geht
 Waghaltenden Schrittes der Kapitan["]
 Und lächelnd empor in die Segel späht["]

.....

Dort klettert ein Junge gar frisch und heiter
 Die Sprossen hinauf der schwankenden Leiter ;
 Schon hat er erreicht in munterer Hast
 Die höchsten Segel am stolzen Mast (etc.).

Lenau might not unfairly claim kinship with the author of
 'The Dauber' on the strength of this one poem alone . Only
 the last three stanzas with their reference to the mermaids,
 like the first of the 'Atlantica' poems ('Die Seejungfrauen')
 reminds us that this poet after all, notwithstanding his keen

eye for nautical details, was a highly cultured saloon passenger like Heine, rather than a practical realist like Masfield. His pictures of the mermaids in their coral palaces (ibid., cf. also I, 384, passim) and of the clouds joining their 'old mother' the sea (I, 245) are essentially literary, not to say 'Romantic'. Lenau moreover, again unlike Masfield,¹⁾ but also unlike Heine,²⁾ was not fond of the sea. He had looked forward to seeing it³⁾ and declared that it had taught him a great deal⁴⁾, but the predominating feeling it left with him was one of awe; witness a striking passage in his 'Faust':

.....hinaus in's Meer,
Das ist so einsam, wild und leer,
Das blüht nicht auf, das welkt nicht ab,
Ein ungeschmücktes, ewiges Grab. (II, 172)

Alone on deck in mid-ocean he longs impatiently for the shore, for home (I, 55; 194, 195, 246) and feels relieved to see a passenger's child smiling at him:

Wo fremd die Luft, das Himmelslicht,
Im kalten Wogenlarne,
Wie wohl tut Menschenangesicht
Mit seiner stillen Wärme! (I, 195)

He complains that the voyage back from America has robbed him

1) 'Ships and the sea, there's nothing finer made' (The Dauber)
2) vide supra, p. 34
3) cf. letter quoted, Werke (Meyers Ausg., I, XXXVIII): Ich glaube ich werde eine leidenschaftliche Liebe zum Meere fassen ... Ich spüre schon den Reichtum von poetischen Ideen, die mir die Natur

of the spring :

Den Lenz und seine Nachtigallen

Versäumt' ich auf der wüsten See . (I,82)

His Faust prefers the sea to the land because it falls in with his mood of hopeless longing (II,184).

Many of the epithets, too, which Lenau chooses for the sea are expressive of the same attitude : 'der wallende Abgrund, das drohende Meer' (I,262) , 'die kalten Wogen' (I,198, cf. II,190), 'die fremde See', 'das weite fremde Meer' (II,179), 'die weite fremde Meereswüste' (I,55). Others are of the conventional type such as have already been met with many times in the works of his predecessors : 'tief' (I,179,198,244,124,II,202), 'wild' (I,55,II,153,178), 'weit' (I,296,II,93,129,179), 'wüst' (I,82, II,150), 'gross' (II,193), 'weich' (I,193), 'frei' (I,218). It is only rarely that he mentions colours : 'die dunkle Flut' (I,61, cf. 196, II,183). The roar of the Atlantic waves too plays a very inconspicuous part : 'es braust das Meer' (I,196, similarly I,194,245). An interesting passage in his 'Faust' suggests thoughts of Heine's 'Abenddämmerung' :

Schlaflieder murmelt ...der Wellenchor .

.....

Bald ist's ein Rieseln, ein Geflüster bald,
dann wieder ein geheimnisvolles Klingen,

auf meiner Reise entgegenstreuen wird. Aber noch ist es erst eine dunkle Ahnung. (Oct. 1832). 4) *ibid.* Ich bin jetzt um ein Gutes reicher dass ich auch das Meer kennen gelernt habe. Die nachhaltigste u. beste Wirkung dieser Seereise ist ein gewisser feierlicher Ernst, der sich durch den langen Anblick des Erhabenen

Als wenn die Winde über Wies' und Wald
 Den Rest verstreuter Glockentöne bringen ;
 Nun braust es dumpf, wie Wasserfälle rauschen,
 Wie vom Gebirge hirtliche Schälmeien,
 Nun wieder hört ein träumerisches Lauschen
 Von fernem Spielplatz lust'ge Kinder schreien . (II, 180)

It is the 'idea' of the ocean, its vastness, its loneliness,
 rather than its sights and sounds, that appears to have made
 the strongest impression upon this poet .

Perhaps it was no mere accident that the collection of
 poems entitled 'Schutt' published in 1835 by Lenau's friend
 and admirer Graf Anton Alexander von Auersperg ('Anastasius
 Grün') contained a section which might well have been headed
 'Adriatica' , although its actual name is the somewhat vague
 'Erinnerungen an Adria' (Werke, II, 80-99). Of its fifteen poems
 no less than twelve are direct apostrophes to, or studies of,
 the sea, informing us what the poet saw 'Am Strande' or 'Auf
 freien Wogen' and how he reacted towards the impressions thus
 received : the wide expanse of the ocean ('Begrüssung des
 Meeres'), the ships, fishing nets and debris on the shore ('Am
 Strande'), the pomegranate tree by the shore ('Der Granatbaum'),

in mir befestigt hat. Das Meer ist mir zu Herzen gegangen. Das
 sind zwei Hauptmomente die mich gebildet haben: dieses Atlanti-
 sche Meer und die österreichischen Alpen ; doch möchte ich mich
 vorzugsweise einen Zögling der letzteren nennen.

the Greek vessel with its blue-white flag ('Hellas'), and the solitary rock 'mitten in das Meer gesat' ('Die Einsamen'). The separate objects impinging upon his consciousness, however, are named--one might almost say suggested-- rather than described, being in fact only the pegs upon which the author proceeds to hang the philosophical thought or the train of reflexions aroused by them, as e.g. in 'Meerfahrt' :

Wie so rein des Himmels Bläue

Über meinem Haupte glänzt,

Fest und licht wie ew'ge Treue,

Wandellos und unbegrenzt !

Gleich dem ew'gen Frieden schimmert

Ruhig, klar und grün das Meer ;

Wie die heil'ge Liebe flimmert

Hell die Sonne drüberher.

Similarly the blue and white flag on a ship's mast, 'Hellas' Flagge' , serves only to introduce a lengthy disquisition on the glories and sufferings of Greece ; the rock and the tree swallowed by the waves ('Die Einsamen') would seem to have been mentioned only because they symbolise the fate of certain contemporary German poets . His poem 'Begrüssung des Meeres' proves that Graf Auersperg was impressed and awed, perhaps

even to a certain extent repelled by the sea, like Lenau ,
 ('manches Leben, manche Hoffnung Deckst du kalt und fühllos
 zu'), but he has not done much to help us to visualise it ;
 in the majority of cases, indeed, he presents it without any
 descriptive epithets whatever :

Aufs Meer bin ich gefahren

Im Kahne ganz allein (II,98).

Where he does grant it an adjective, the latter is of the most
 obvious sort : 'still und blau' (II,84,98), 'ruhig, klar und
 grün' (II,87,88). The enumeration of sights beheld on the sea
 shore, true to life though it appears, is one which might have
 been given by the most careless observer :

Auf hochgestapelte Ballen blickt

Der Kaufherr mit Ergötzen ;

Ein armer Fischer daneben flickt

Betrübt an zerrissenen Netzen .

Manch rüstig stolz bewimpelt Schiff !

Manch morsches Wrack im Sande !

Der Hafen hier, und dort das Riff,

Jetzt Flut, jetzt Ebb' am Strande .

The Adriatic poems in fact, as well as the 'Sonette aus Helgoland'

(III, 67-75) are 'Reflexionspoesie' pure and simple .¹⁾

The same must be said of the 'Helgoländer Lieder' of Hoffmann von Fallersleben, the first-fruits of a month's stay on the island of Heligoland (19 August - 21 Sept. 1840). The poet versifies the North Sea with the same fatal facility which he shows in treating wine, woman, song, patriotism, and sundry other subjects, magnificent or trivial, suggested to him by his everyday experiences ; the result, however, has not been such as to call for detailed examination .

More attention is due to the work of Ferdinand Freiligrath, whose claims to a position of honour among German sea poets have long been recognised . He familiarised himself with the smell of salt water during his residence at Amsterdam (1831-36) and won his first laurels by the publication (1835) of a small group of poems two of which ('An das Meer' and 'Schiffbruch') deal with the sea .²⁾ His very first known poem ('Moostee'), written at the age of sixteen) tells of Iceland, where

1) Excepting perhaps Sonnet I, p. 74, in which the loneliness and the grey clouds overhanging Heligoland are painted with a few vivid touches :
 Od ist dies Eiland, baumlos, windversengt,
 Die starre Burg und Warte der Orkane ;
 Bleifarbig um die morschen Zinnen hängt
 Das Nordgewölk, wie eine graue Fahne . (etc.)

2) Ges. Dicht., Einleitung, IX. Diese Sammlung (1838)... enthielt überwiegend Meer- u. ferne Zonenbilder.... Sie glichen Romanen ganz neuer Art, die den Leser in fremde, von der Poesie bisher nicht betretene Gebiete versetzten : auf das Meer, in den Orient, in die Wüste.

...am Strand die Robben winseln

.....

Und das Eismeer schäumt und braut (I,5),

and at every stage of his life, in all his writings, in the exotic ballads and romances of 1838 which established his fame, in the political verses of his middle period ('Ein Glaubensbekenntnis') 'Ca ira') as well as in the occasional poems of his later years ('Nadel und Draht' ; 'Wilhelm Müller, eine Geisterstimme') the ocean and sea going ships perpetually recur. His position, too, is not by any means only due to his numerous nautical ballads and the patriotic 'Flottentraume' (vide infra, p. 118). The 'Sendlieder' alone, Clemens Brentano declared in 1840, were enough to make their author immortal, and they, like the poems 'Meerfabel' (I,15), 'Nebel' (I,29), 'Meerfahrt' (I,59), 'Leviathan' (I,161), 'Die Schiffe' (I,165), are 'Stimmungsbilder' as much as those of Heine, Lenau, and the poets of the Rügen school. He himself, as is proved by certain stanzas in his poem 'Einem Ziehendem', was well aware that in the search for 'Liederkronen auf der Flut Gezisch' he continued a tradition which began with Homer and had found representatives in the German literature of his own day :

....weht nicht auch

Der Dichtung Hauch

1) in a letter to Freiligrath, quoted in R.M. Meyer, D.deut.Lit. d.19. Jahrh. (Berlin, 1912) p.205.

Auf diesen Wassern ?

.....

Stand Lenau nicht noch jüngst an einem Steu'r

Und sah den Schlei'r

Die Meerfrau'n lüften ?....

Und schwamm nicht in des Rurik's Wellenwieg'

Der auf den Fels Salas y Gomez stieg ? (I,24) ¹⁾

His methods and technique, however, differed appreciably from those of his predecessors .

To most of the latter the sea and the ships sailing upon it had been either the counterpart, the visible embodiment, of their own mood of the moment (Heine, Lenau) or convenient starting points for philosophical or historical disquisitions (Platen, Auersperg, Hoffmann von Fallersleben). Their manner of approach had been entirely subjective ; the poet himself, not the object he paints, is the real centre of the story, even if he has no more to tell us than that he once spent an enjoyable holiday by the Adriatic or the North Sea . Reduced to a formula, the simple elements of the matter may be given thus:

(a) the poet is confronted with the sea,

(b) the poet describes the mood in which he finds himself . ²⁾

1) The influence upon F. of modern English sea poets, notably of Felicia Hemans, and Coleridge, has been investigated by G.W. Spink ('F. als Verdeutscher der engl. Poesie', Berl. 1925). A small number of parallel passages may be discovered, although the material available is hardly sufficient to warrant a charge of plagiarism . 2) cf. Heine: Hochaufrauschten d. Meereswogen
Und ich sass noch lange im Dunkeln u. weinte.

In the case of Freiligrath the second part of the formula would have to run : (b) the poet describes what the sea has to tell him .

'Am Gestade rausch ich gerne,
 Lecke gern den harten Sand ;

 Hier vergess ich wie so finster
 Draussen ist das hohe Meer .
 Das die kalten Stürme peitschen,
 Wo der Normann Fische fangt,
 Wo das Eismeer mit des deutschen
 Meers Gewässern sich vermengt . ('Meerfabel', I,16).

In this case it is actually the waves that are supposed to be speaking, not the poet . Similarly in the poem entitled 'Florida of Boston' (I,90), a magnificently realistic picture of the berthing in Amsterdam of an American vessel straight from sea, the author keeps his own personality in the background as though he were a descriptive reporter commissioned to prepare an account of the vessel's arrival for a newspaper ; it is the United States' flag 'auf dem Besanmast hoch' (ostensibly) which tells its tale of American lakes and prairies, 'sie bringt der alten Welt von einer neuen Meldung', not Ferdinand

Freiligrath . Where Heine or Lenau, essentially self-centred, would have explained in what manner the ship could be taken to embody their own mood of the moment or outlook upon life, Freiligrath looks at the 'Florida of Boston', or at the 'Amphitrite' (I,9) , and tells us what he sees ; with a degree of accuracy and fidelity to actual detail (the yellow hats of the sailors, the Newfoundland dog guarding the captain's cabin) and even to technical phraseology (Bugspruet, Takelwerk, Besanmast, Schleuse, Planken, Bassin) almost, if not quite, rivalling Rudyard Kipling, superior to that of Lenau, and far outdistancing e.g. his predecessor Lappe's clumsy attempts at nautical realism (vide supra, p.³²) The same faculty of keen observation, too, is apparent in his beach pictures :

Die Körner...die am Strand
 Des Meeres unter mir erknirschen (I,19) ---
 Der Sand des Meeres...kühl und frisch
 Und feucht von Furchen und von Gleisen (ibid.) ---
 Vom Meere fährt heran der Wind ;
 Die Körner wehn, Meergräser schwanken. (ibid.) ---
(der) Sand vor Wind und Flut
 Sich jagt in wirbelnden Gestalten (ibid.)---

Der Dunen schwach begraster Wall (ibid.) ---
 the mists hiding everything save the setting sun and 'eine
 Handbreit See' ('Nebel', I, 29).

Remarkable as well as effective although it is, however,
 Freiligrath's realism constitutes only one half of his secret.
 The other half, as in the case of Rudyard Kipling (with whom
 he can in many respects be compared) , consists in his
 unfailing sense for the picturesque, combined with the ability
 to embody his fancies in concrete images, of which his very
 first poem, 'Moostee' -- a picturesque description of Iceland,
 suggested by a tonic prepared from a Northern plant -- forms
 one of the best known illustrations . In 'Meerfabel' a
 realistic account of the sea shore (a fisherman's coble
 'ebbetrocken auf dem Strande' , a barefooted lad overhauling his
 nets, and fish drying in the sun on a wooden frame) serves
 to introduce, not, as in Auersperg's 'Am Strande',¹⁾ a string
 of platitudes on the transitoriness of life as exemplified by
 the sea, but a vigorously drawn picture of 'storm beaten
 Arctic waters and a life-and-death struggle between two sea
 monsters ; an afternoon's sail 'allein auf dem stillen Meer'
 suggests the tale of the lost city sunk beneath the waves
 ('Meerfahrt') ; the sight of a negro ex-sailor begging his

1) 'O Meer, o Meer, so trüb und wild,
 Wie gleichst du so ganz dem Leben ! (etc.)', ^{4. Aufl.} Werke, II, 82 .

bread in a European port begets thoughts of African forests, slave ships, and sea fights (I,26,cf.I,13).

We follow the career of the fir tree from its forest home to the high seas after it has become a ship's mast ('Die Tanne', I,113) ; the very figure heads of vessels lying quietly at anchor in port whisper tales of Eastern waters and foreign lands ('Die Schiffe', I,165).

It is a remarkable fact that this imaginative power which impresses itself upon the most casual reader of Freiligrath's poetry did not also reveal itself in his phraseology and language, as it did, e.g. in the case of Heine (vide supra, p.35.) The epithets which he applies to the sea are few and commonplace : 'wüst' (I,24), 'heilig' (I,27), 'tiefblau' (I,10), 'grau' (I,10,15,66), 'grün' (I,117), 'weiss' (I,160), 'salzig' (I,15,219), 'schwellend und rund' (of the waves) (I,117), 'finster' (I,100), 'uralt' (I,102), 'bewegt' (I,133).

'Einsam, schauerlich und finster ist das ferne, hohe Meer' , he tells us on one occasion (I,17) ; another poem ('Die Toten im Meere') paints the ocean as a vast grave in which the monsters and mermaidens of the deep play with the bones of the drowned (I,116).¹⁾ He leaves us under no doubt, however, that he loves the sea ; witness his apostrophe to it entitled 'An das Meer' :

1) cf. Shakespeare: Full fathom five thy father lies (etc.) ? (G.W. Spink, p.26).

....O Meer,verliehst du nicht den brennendroten Saft,
 Den heil'gen Purpur,draus man Kon'gen Mantel schafft,
 Den Mannern von Beryt und Tyrus ?
 Ja, du bist reich ! ich sah bis auf den Grund dich,Meer!
 Wie dem von Sidon du die Muschel gabst,dass er
 Den Purpur auf die Wolle drucke :
 So hast du meinem Blick dein Inn'res aufgetan,
 So liessest du im Geist mich deine Pracht empfahn,
 Auf dass sie meine Lieder schmucke . (I,100) 2

He knows no greater pleasure, he declares in another place
 ('Hafengang',I,221) than to wander along the quays of a great
 sea port at night and to watch the mighty ships with their
 brown-faced sailors , 'nackt von Hals, mit weiten Hosen,
 Wein und Jugend in den Adern' . Here again, as so often,it
 is the picturesque, the exotic, that chiefly attracts him.

The sea plays a part in several poems of the well-known
 leader of the Berlin 'tunnel' group of poets, C.F.Scherenberg.
 viz. 'Fischerlied' (17), 'Fischers Heimfahrt' (19), 'Vorbei'
 (50), 'Der Polfahrer im Binnenmeer' (132), 'Der Leuchtturm-
 wachter'(157), 'Seemanns Wort auf die Lebensreise' (139) ;
 their conventionality, as well as their shortness,however.

1) cf. F.Hemans :The treasures of the Deep'(Works,vol.IV,p.134)?
 1844

renders it unnecessary to subject them to a detailed analysis. As a representative example the lines entitled 'Vorbei' may be quoted :

Ade,ade,du Heimatstrand,
 Weht,Winde,wehet schnell !
 Es tanzt der Port,das grüne Land,
 Es tanzt die blaue Well' .
 Die Wolken zieh'n, es rollen die Wogen,
 Juchhei !
 Wie Wind mein Gold und Silber geflogen
 Vorbei !

Attention may also be called to the introduction of technical terms (Kompass,Log,Kurs,Deck,Kiel,Wimpel,Takelwerk,Tau,Fockmast,Besaan,Bugspriet,etc.) into the last three of the above-named poems ; an attempt at realism which links their author with several of his predecessors already mentioned and goes beyond them in including Low German terms (Kieker,Baken) ; an anticipation of the deliberately realistic method later used with such success by Liliencron (vide infra, p. 91).

No more than a brief mention is due to the amiable Thuringian pastor Julius Sturm (1816-96) whose last volume of poems,

('In Freud und Leid' , published posthumously) contains a few examples of typical 'Reflexionspoesie' written 'Am Strande der Ostsee' . True, a marine setting is given, or rather indicated ('Ich sass am Strande, dumpf brauste das Meer'¹), or:

Ein Schiff mit schwarzer Flagge

Durchfurcht die brausende Flut) ; the 'matter' of the poems, however, is so frankly religious in character that they may safely be disregarded in this connection . Little material too is to be found in the poems (as apart from the ballads) of Graf Moritz von Strachwitz, whose name occurs side by side with that of Sturm in Koch's list of modern German poets of the sea ('Dichter die das Meer besungen haben'). 'Gebt mir einen Segler, mastenstolz, dass ich drauf die Wellen reite !' , the poet exclaims once ('In das Weite', p.23) ; another time we find him comparing his love to a Southern sea (63) or, in an elaborate metaphor, describing how :

Des Sanges Schiff lag matt vor Anker

Es schliessen Segel, Luft und Flut (etc.) (118) ;

similes and allusions of this sort, however, scarcely point to definite conclusions unless, as in the case of Annette von Droste, a poet displays a marked fondness for them . Only two poems ('Erste Meerfahrt' , and 'Meeresabend') are directly

1) Koch, p.99 .

devoted to the sea and they do not afford the author much scope magnificent though they are :

Den Leuchtturm vorbei und den Hafendamm,
O Herrin im Süden, ade !
Hochspringend über den Wellenkamm
Erhebt sich das meerdurchschweifende
Schwarzbusige, weitausgreifende
Dampfschnaubende Ross der See ! ... (~~QWEX~~ 125)

Even so, one may fairly guess, one of the viking heroes whose deeds Graf Strachwitz has so often sung in his ballads, would have addressed a steam ship .

This poet must have looked upon the sea with no unkindly eye ; the evidence available, however, is not sufficient to allow of drawing further conclusions .

1) cf. the O.E. terms : yð-hengest, yð-mearh, sīðfaedme scip, saegenga, etc. (Merbach, p. 29 et seq.)

Chapter II.

Poetry descriptive of the sea and of the sea shore(1848-80)

More material is to hand in the case of Emanuel Geibel . The Baltic, by the shore of which he grew up, was as familiar to him as were the Hanseatic traditions of his native Lübeck (cf. 'Lübeck's Bedrangnis' , I,223 ; 'Eine Septembernacht', II,34) ; two sections of his poetical works, 'Ostseelieder' and 'Distichen vom Strande der See' , owe their inspiration directly to it, and a number of other poems bear witness to the prominent part which the sea and the sea shore (although not, as in the case of some of his predecessors, the ocean or the ocean going ship) played in their author's life ; even as an old man, he tells us, he is to be found collecting amber and sea shells 'im schlupfrigen Meersand, wie ich als Knabe getan ' (IV,36). The Adriatic, too, he knew (V,95), like Platen and Grün . All this notwithstanding, however, the reader who comes to the study of Geibel's works after having examined those of Freiligrath is likely to experience a profound disappointment . This poet writes by, rather than about the sea ; he briefly sketches his surroundings, often only in one introductory stanza (III,133,IV,54) or even in a few lines (IV,53,54), but the main content of each poem

1) e.g. I,79,I,137,II,41,II,55,III,133,V,71 .

deals with his own personality and with the thoughts and feelings which happen to be uppermost in him at the moment : admiration of the beauty of the young girl whom he sees striding along the jetty (III,133 ; cf.IV,56), parting grief (I,137), memories of the past (II,55;III,126;V,59) or pantheistic fancies (II,41;IV,55;V,54). Even in the 'Ostseelieder' , which may be taken as affording the most direct evidence with regard to the manner in which their author reacted towards the ocean, he shows himself incapable of rising above the most obvious of commonplaces : the infinity of the sea (IV,52), its mysteriousness (IV,60), the evanescence of human delights and griefs as typified by the waves (IV,58), and thrice-hackneyed memories of history (cf. the allusion to the vikings, V,72), literary romance or folklore ('das Spiel des Wassermanns', IV,53); 'der Meerfrau Singen', IV,55 ; Neptune brandishing his trident, IV,59 ; 'die Nixe am Movenstein', IV,54 ; 'Siegfried der Schnelle', IV,55). His descriptions of sea and shore are concise to the point of baldness and not infrequently prosaic in the extreme : e.g. 'Nordostwind hatten wir, die See ging hoch' ,

Ich lieg' in Träumen

Am Hünengrab

Und blick' aufs Schaumen

Der See hinab . (IV,54)

1) except in the 'Epistel aus Travemünde', IV,36.

Es rauscht das Meer gelinde,
 "Gewölkumschleiert sinkt der Tag
 Und lockend ziehn im Winde
 Gesang und Harfenschlag . (IV,55) ;

Es liegt am öden Dünenstrand
 Ein Kloster halb zerfallen,
 Um Gang und Stufen weht das Schilf,
 Die Flut spielt in die Hallen . (IV,57).

Epithets are few and unoriginal : 'die ferne Flut' (II,41),
 'auf weiter Flut' (I,231,II,56), 'heil'ges Meer' (IV,51),
 'das ewige Meer' (V,52), 'das wilde Meer' (IV,54), 'die glatte
 Meereswelle' (IV,58). References to colour and sound effects
 are not absent : 'die grüne Flut' (I,138,IV,58), 'der dunkel-
 blaue Sund' (II,86,cf.IV,36,52,etc.), 'tiefpurpurn schwillt
 um mich die Flut' (IV,53), 'schaumweisse Hügel' (V,71),
 'wie Bernstein flimmerte der Sand' (II,41), 'o leiser Wogen-
 schlag,eintonig Lied' (II,55), 'des Meeres Brausen' (III,126),
 'langsam ...rollt die Flut und brandet sacht' (IV,60) ; but
 they are seldom elaborated (cf.IV,36,38). Like Heine,of whose

'Nordseebilder' these 'Ostseelieder' appear a clumsy copy, Geibel hears 'ein uralt Lied' in the roaring of the waters (IV,54), 'der Weltmelodie dunkel verhallenden Laut' (V,54) or 'der Meerfrau Singen' (IV,55). He does indeed protest his love for the sea, 'the 'mother' who nursed and consoled him in youth (IV,51; cf. III,121), in whose silent grottoes he seeks refuge from the troubles of the world (I,251) :

Wenn ich singen will von ew'gen Dingen,
Such ich den alten Forst an hoher Kuste,
Wo Meer und Wald ihr rauschend Wort verschlingen...
(II,98).

The fruits of his passion, however, must be called as uninspiring as they are unoriginal .

No more than a brief disquisition is due to Geibel's fellow-poets of the Munich School, Hermann Lingg, Robert Hamerling, Graf Schack, and Martin Greif . All of them sing the beauties of the Mediterranean, in Capri (e.g. Lingg, Jahresringe, 507 ; Schack, Gedichte, 169), at Naples (e.g. Hamerling, Sinnen u.

1) cf. Heine, I, 129 : Uralte liebliche Märchen .

2) cf. Heine, I, 84 : Das ist der Seejungfern Gesang,
I, 158 : .. aus hochaufrauschendem Meer

Tönt der Gesang der Okeaniden ; other parallels
are : Geibel, I, 79 :: Heine, I, 83, 145 ;

Geibel, III, 212 :: Heine, I, 149 ;

Geibel, IV, 58 :: Heine, II, 26 ; classical and literary allusions
(vide supra) ; subjectivism (vide supra).

Minnen,39) or 'An der Adria' (e.g. Greif,Werke,I,342), in the manner, now almost stereotyped, of Platen,Grün, and Geibel ; Schack,a Mecklenburger, also apostrophises the North Sea ('...den Strand,wo ich den ersten Jugendtraum geträumt') and Martin Greif localises several of his poems on the Baltic (Werke,I,346 : 'Auf der Memel'; 'Im Hafen'; 'Haffmündung'; 'An der Düne') ; in content (Reflexionspoesie)as well as in technique,however, (little or no description, few and conventional epithets,no realism) they do not rise in any way above their forerunners above mentioned (Platen,Grün, and Geibel) whose work indeed it would be difficult to distinguish from theirs, were it presented to the critic unsigned . Lingg wanders by the Mediterranean shore and is stirred by memories of Hannibal, 'Venezia' , 'Candiotes', and of foundering galleys (like Grün, vide supra). Greif philosophises on the impulses given to the mind by the sight of the sea waves (I,108 :Am Meere) -- without,however,describing the latter --or imagines 'Was die Wellen mit dem Schiff plaudern' :

Willst du immer zagen noch und zaudern
Da dich lockend unsere Flut umdrängt ?

.....

Einem dunkeln Glücke nachzujagen
Ach,es ist der Sehnsucht liebster Traum. (I,345).

Hamerling sees the mermaid beckon from a grotto in Capri (Sinnen u. Minnen, 39, cf. 82, 176) and describes the merman's bride, adorned with pearls and corals by 'die Meerfeien' ; the sea waves for him are 'des Meeres kristallene Sirenen, die ihre ["]mächtigen Lieder singen (ibid., 242).

Local colour is dealt out with a most sparing hand, cf. e.g. Lingg's poem entitled 'Capri' :

Um Capreas Felsenriffe
Schimmern in der Sonnenglut
Kleine weisse Segelschiffe,
Tief im Abgrund schäumt die Flut.

(Jahresringe, 307) ;

Hamerling's 'Sommernacht am Meere' :

Ich wand're durch die Gassen
Hinab ans dunkle Meer.
Da liegt sein blauer Spiegel
Ein Weltenliebesbrief (sic)
Mit goldnem Sternensiegel
So schweigend und so tief .

(Sinnen u. Minnen, 54) ;

or Greif's 'Ausblick aufs Meer' :

So still ist das Haus
Und menschenleer,

Durch Lauben und Buchten hinaus
 Schau ich aufs Meer .

Ich schau mich nicht satt
 An seinem Glanz,
 Sein Spiegel ist gleissend und ~~hier~~ glatt
 Und ruhet ganz . (I,105 ; similarly

I,114 :Ein Tag am Meere ; I,342 :An der Adria).

Only one poem by Greif, a hymn to the Suez Canal and to the intrepid mariners whose toil binds the nations of the world together (I,399), may be said to rear its head above this ocean of conventionality , and with it should be coupled Hamerling's macabre picture of a doomed civilisation , visualised as a gigantic steam ship about to be wrecked , in 'Ein Schwanenlied der Romantik' . Both are still obviously the work of landsmen poets, particularly the former with its suggestion of seafarers idling away the long days 'draussen im Weltmeer' and its strangely untechnical allusion to the unquiet life of the sailor, 'des segelnden Mannes im Boot' (sic) ; they represent another attempt at actual realism, however, such as had already been made by Lappe and later by Lenau and Freiligrath . It is perhaps significant that Hamerling too (like Freiligrath)

played with the thought of a German navy (vide infra, chap. V.)^{p. 119}
 although only one of his poems deals with this subject .

All these poets, like their master Geibel, are emphatic in expressing their veneration for the sea :

Meer, heiliges Meer ! in deinem Wetterbrausen

Hor' ich die Donnerworte Gottes sausen .. (Schack, Ged. 364,
 cf. ibid., 96) ;

....auch das Meer ist schön, auch im Meer ist Freiheit,

Das Meer auch rauscht wie der Wald, und in rollenden Wassern
 braust,
 Wie in Hochwaldgipfeln, der Hauch der Unendlichkeit.

(Hamerling, Sinnen u. M., 330) ;

Meer und Nacht, wie seid ihr schön ! (Lingg, Jahresr. 142) ;

Heil dem Meere !

Heil seinen hochrollenden Wogen !

Heil dem gewaltigen

"Landerungurtenden"

Allumfassenden Ozean ! (Greif, Der Kanal von Suez) ---;

although their admiration in the case of Lingg and Hamerling
 is not altogether unmixed with awe :

Kann's unsere Seele fassen

Wie's einsam, freudeleer,

Wie es "od' ist und verlassen,
 O wie furchtbar ist das Meer ! (Lingg, Schlussteine, 38 ;
 cf. Jahresr., 322 (sea and reefs=demons at play)
 ..wer beschreift, ein Wanderer,
 zuerst ein muschelblinkend Flutgestad
 Vom Bergeshang herab und stiess mit Schauder
 Auf's furchtbar schöne Zauberbild der See...

(Hamerling, Sinnen u.M., 130).

We have already heard similar sentiments expressed by Lenau
 (vide supra, p. 56.).

Paul Heyse localises several of his 'Novellen in Versen' on
 the Mediterranean coast (vide infra, p.) ; an examination of
 his poetical works, however, yields no material worth mentioning
 excepting the brief allusion to 'des heiligen Meeres Element'
 in his well known 'Lied von Sorrent' (I, 38). Friedrich Boden-
stedt's short cycle of poems 'Von der Nordsee' shows a manner
 and attitude which coincide with those of Geibel in practically
 every respect : the sea waves at night whisper 'uralte Melodien

Von Götterzorn und Riesenkampf,
 Drachen- und Schlangenbrut,
 Von Schlachtjungfrau und

Rossgestampf (etc.)
 (IX, 223);

the poet wanders by the sea and thinks of his mistress (IX, 221, 224) or feels despondent (ibid., 220) ; he apostrophises the sea :

"Gurtel der Erde,
Spiegel des Himmels,
Urborn des Lebens,
Wogende Meerflut,

Sei mir gegrüsst ! (218), and approaches it in the hope of finding peace of mind by its waves :

Lass mich in deiner Segensflut
Die Perle der Gesundheit finden ! .

..... Uns liebt nur das Meer

Und wir lieben es wieder , he exclaims in another poem written on the Black Sea in 1845, 'Der Gesang der Winde' . His descriptions, too, : 'wogende Meerflut' (IX, 218) ; 'das öde Meer' (IX, 200) ; 'die Welle weiss wie Schnee' (ibid., 221), are few in number and utterly conventional . Only a few lines from the poem 'Norderney' strike the imagination :

Auf Meeresfahrten sah ich weiland
Der Inseln mancherlei,
Doch nie kam ein so ödes Eiland
Mir vor wie Norderney .

Das Meer wälzt um die nackten Dünen
 Sich schwer und grau wie Blei,
 Die Blumen blühn, die Bäume grünen
 Nie frisch auf Norderney . (IX, 224).

This, one feels, was written by an observer with his eye on the object . Most of the other poems, however, e.g. the imaginary picture of the sea's marvels and horrors suggested to the poet by a sea shell ('Die Seemuschel', IX. 217) , might have been composed in the study , as were certainly the descriptions of tropical waters and of the shipwreck in the 'epic poem' 'Die Insel' of another member of the Munich School, Wilhelm Jensen . The simple incidents and everyday routine on board of a vessel on the high seas, the 'Wimmeln in den Raaen' (20) and foc'sle conversation (25) of the sailors, the confusion and terror of the crew fighting the gale (48-60), are described in semi-technical language and not without humour, somewhat in the manner of Kopisch's 'Klabautermann' ; the patently anachronistic character of the setting, however (the action is supposed to take place in the thirteenth century) as well as the boldly imaginative treatment adopted (cf. the description of the 'isle of ghosts', 53, passim) sufficiently preclude any attempt to regard the author as a realist, unless indeed the

first scene of Shakespeare's 'Tempest' can be allowed to rank as a serious study of Elizabethan seamanship and nautical tradition . Many of Jensen's shorter poems, on the other hand, betray a sensitive nature attuned to the most delicate vibrations of light and sound, such as we have not yet met with in the poets previously discussed, (excepting indeed Heine, and Annette von Droste and perhaps Lenau) :

Ubers Meer
 Entfliehen wie Vogel
 Weisse lichte Segel,
 Das Ufer ist leer .
 In müdem Lauf
 Rollt dumpf die See
 Sie murmelt herauf :
 Brich auf, brich auf --

Ade .

(Gedichte, 11)

Or again :

Fern bis zum Himmel schweigsam, weit und gross,
 Liegt still die See. Sie schläft, und odemlos,
 Regt sie kein Hauch,
 Nur dann und wann, mit immer gleichem Klang,
 Rollt eine lange Welle auf den Strand .

Ein dumpfes Schauern ist es, todesbang,
 Und kommt daher und lischt in "odem Sand.
 Ich kenne deine "Dunung, stumme See,
 Der dunkeln Tiefe ruheloses Weh . ('Dunung', ibid., 15)

There is nothing conventional here; no allusions to mermaids or sea gods; no trite moralising or recalling of events connected with the poet's own past; not even set descriptions in the photographer manner of Platen and Grün . The poet surrenders himself to atmosphere ; he shares in the mood of the sea and enables his readers to do the same ; and the result is first of all a 'Stimmungsbild' rather than a 'Naturbild' , e.g. we are not even told the colour of the sea waves or of the shore. The author suggests and hints rather than states and explains. The same holds good of his fellow-countryman and friend Theodor Storm in his North Sea tales and in the few ~~but~~ unforgettable poems to which he owes his place in this study : ('Die Stadt'; 'Meeresstrand' ; 'Morgane' and 'Ostern') : description is reduced to a minimum, epithets are rare, although concise and full of meaning when they occur :

Am grauen Strand, am grauen Meer
 Und seitab liegt die Stadt ;

.....

...durch die Stille braust das Meer
Eintonig um die Stadt .

Ans Haff nun fliegt die Move
Und Dämm'ung bricht herein ;
Über die feuchten Watten
Spiegelt der Abendschein . (I,10).

It is our own imagination, assisted only by vague hints from the poet, that must re-create for us 'des gährenden Schlammes geheimnissvollen Ton' (I,10) and 'die Stimmen die über der Tiefe sind' (ibid.) or picture 'Morgane, die berufne Fee' (as startling an appearance in the North as the evocation of Neptune or of 'die Meerfrau' would have been conventional) working her spells by the shore .

In the poem entitled 'Gräber an der Küste' again, the sea is barely mentioned as a part of the general setting, even in 'Ostern' it occupies a subordinate place . Storm's own attitude to it is nowhere expressed definitely except perhaps in one grimly defiant closing stanza (:

Und jauchzend liess ich an der festen Wahr
Den Wellenschlag die grimmen Zähne reiben ;
Denn machtlos, zischend schoss zurück das Meer --

Das Land ist unser, unser soll es bleiben ! (I,97).

Probably, like so many men of his race, he was inclined to regard the sea to some extent as the hereditary enemy, 'der Marsen alter Feind' .

Several other North German poets of the second half of the nineteenth century deserve at least passing mention, viz. the Rhinelander Emil Ritterhaus, who learned to appreciate the splendour of the sea on the Dutch coast (although it seems to have suggested no other motifs to him than the conventional ones of the bodies of the drowned, resting beneath the waves, the pearls hidden far below, and of the merman in his castle who may not see salvation) ; the Frisian Hermann Allmers, certain of whose poems ('Friesengruss', V,4 ; 'Einladung in die Marsch', V,12 ; 'Am Strande', V,12) include distinct references to, although very little description of, North German waters and coast scenery, and the Pomeranian Hans Hoffmann . The last-named author's studies of the sea coast ('Dünenbilder', 207-10, 239) even surpass those of Freiligrath in their graphic realism :

Nackt und blendend lagert die Düne.

Heiss über dem Sandmeer zittert die Luft,

1) To these may be added, for the sake of completeness only, the name of Eduard Closter, whose 'Nordseeklänge' (303 pages of versified reflections dealing with various aspects of the North Sea and life on the North Sea coast) took shape in the years 1847-51, when their author held the post of Pfarrer on the island of Wangerooge. His work may not unfairly be described as a string of platitudes, with a minimum of description and without a single

Nach Atem ringend
 Im Druck der Sonne.
 "Durre Graser, versprengt und einsam
 Ertrinken im Sande .
 In glasigem Glast liegt schwer und stumpf
 "Hinbrütend das Meer,

.....

..... wo das Auge

"Mude forschend
 Dem Boden streift,
 Enthüllt es ein heimlich
 Regen und Rinnen hier und dort,
 Ein Huschen der Körner,
 Ein zitternd Rieseln und Fliessen,
 "Als sahe das Auge
 Die feinsten Nerven
 Des schlafenden Wildlings
 Vor dem Erwachen zucken und zittern .

(V.L., 207-8)

He loves the sea ('Ich aber liebe dich, mein Ostseestrand',
 ibid., 371) as does Allmers (cf. 'Friesengruss', V, 4 ; 'Strandlust',

touch of realism, surpassing even the worst products of Hamerling
 and Lingg in conventionality and dullness ; as e.g. when he is
 found expatiating upon the 'unrestrictedness' of the sea ('See-
 bahnen', 187)

V,18), while Ritterhaus (like Lenau) prefers his inland home :

Dich, o Meerflut, seh ich staunend,
Schaue ich bewundernd an,
Doch mein Herz, es bleibt in Liebe
Meinem Rheinland zugetan . (110).

The Low Germans Fritz Reuter, Klaus Groth, and John Brinckman, to whom chronology would assign a place by the side of the authors just examined, will be treated in a separate chapter (vide infra, chap. V.) .

Chapter III.

Poetry descriptive of the sea and of the sea shore (1880-)

North German waters again occupy a prominent position in the works of the Holsteiner Detlev von Liliencron, although it is in his novels and short stories rather than in his poetry that their influence is chiefly apparent. 'Ick bün von de Waterkant', the poet himself explains on one occasion when questioned about his home (VIII, 51); he has known the lapping of the waves ever since he can remember (I, 90). Northern seas and coasts provide the setting for not a few of his ballads and narrative poems; in the Don Juan like verse tale entitled 'Verbannt' (VII, 106-13) he describes his life on a lonely Frisian island; other poems tell of adventures, thoughts, and feelings that came to him on shipboard (VII, 155); in a small sailing boat (VIII, 187; XI, 21-2); in a fisherman's cabin (VIII, 80); or pacing the beach ('Auf dem Deiche', VIII, 171; 'Auf einer Brücke', VIII, 151). He shows us the North Sea coast at low tide dreaming in the clear heat of a July day (XII, 171); or wrapped in a grey fog, 'ein graues Nebellaken' (VII, 171); at high tide in the evening under a soft spring rain with neither bird nor ship in sight (VIII, 51, *passim*);

we watch the gradual rising of the waves and the disappearance of the sun beneath 'gigantic North Sea clouds' at nightfall while the poet and his boatman are battling with breakers in their cutter (XI, 21); the pageant of the seasons passes before us as it appears to the dwellers on 'Frer Frerksons Werft' (XII, 101, *passim*) -- Heine himself in short has not painted the North Sea under more varied aspects or with greater deliberation than Liliencron. It is not intended to suggest, or even to hint, that the latter was in any way influenced by his predecessor whose name, it should be noted, does not figure in the list of Liliencron's favourite poets as given in several of his works; the similarity between the materials, motifs, and situations employed by the two men, however, (as far as the particular purposes of this study are concerned) is such as to force itself upon the attention of the reader at the very outset.

What methods does Liliencron adopt to help us to visualise his background and how does he produce his effects?

The answer to this question is contained (*implicite*) in his own concise description of his native 'Waterkant':

Wo de Seehund sick spölt vor'n Butendick,
De Regenbagen sick spegelt in'n Slick. (VIII, 53).

Local scenery, concretised to the utmost attainable pitch by the use of the exact local technical terms ('Butendick' and 'Schlick'); local fauna, named with its correct local name, and local climatic effects, painted, not to say photographed, rather than described ; the whole description intensified still further by being couched in the local dialect -- in one word, realism ; more accurate and definite even than that of any of his predecessors , Freiligrath and Hans Hoffmann not excepted . Liliencron always paints straight from the object; cf. e.g. his description of the Butendick (outlying dyke) in 'Poggfred' :

Holl Ebb ! Nur ferne, fern ein Wellenblitz,
 Holl Ebb, so weit wie meine Augen reichen ;
 Im Vorland Schafe und der Schäferspitz .
 Und Schlick und Schlamm . Die Krabbenfischer streichen
 Mit ihren Netzen langsam durch die Prile,
 Ihr Schiffehen gibt der See ein murrisch Zeichen . (etc., XI,
 189))

He builds up a picture by reproducing his sensory impressions, noting down stroke by stroke what he sees and hears, in greater detail than has been the custom of his predecessors (with the

1) But cf. Klaus Groth ? (vide infra, p.125)

only possible exception of Hans Hoffmann) and with a careful accuracy which even leads him to mention the clatter of the nânepins ('das Rollen auf der Kegelbahn') and the creaking of a cradle in a neighbouring house, sounds wafted to his ears as he sits outside a fisherman's cabin (VII,80). He is the first German poet to name and distinguish between the different sea birds found on or near the coast, the 'Regenpfeifer', or 'Tutvogel', 'wilde Schwäne', 'Möwen', (his predecessors only speak of 'gulls' and 'sea birds') as well as to notice the peculiar smell of the sea ('Schon riecht das Wasser her', X,189). None of his predecessors, again, has given us such a vivid description of the incoming tide as the following :

Und wieder kommt die Flut. Erst rillt sie an,
 In langen Strichen perlt sie, und bedeckt,
 Im Anfang langsam, bald den leeren Plan,
 Bis sie das altgewohnte Ufer leckt .
 Sie steigt und steigt zu ihrer höchsten Bahn,
 Hat alles Leben wieder aufgeweckt .

Und Welle wächst aus Welle und zerfließt,
 Und baunt sich abermals und drängt und giesst .

(XI,21 ; cf. XIII,26).

The same phenomenon is described by Heine in one sentence :

....Und die weissen weiten Wellen

Von der Flut gedrängt,

Schaumten und rauschten näher und näher. (I,139)

It is in keeping with the realistic method employed by Lilien-
cron that the epithets which he applies to the sea and its
denizens are few in number and of a practical, i.e. literally
descriptive, rather than of an imaginative kind :

'der letzte graue Strich

Endlosen Wassers.... ' (VII,113),

'die braune, kalte, böse Nordseewelle' (VII,134), 'rasende,
lange, schwarzmähnige Wogen' (VII,157), 'das leere Meer' (VIII,
51), 'die verlassene Hallig' (VIII,52), 'weisse' or 'graue'
Wogen (IX,108; XI,190), 'de solte See' (XII,26), 'die wilde
See' (only once, XI,21), 'heilig Meer' (XI,22). References to
colour effects are rare (for one of the few examples cf. the
description of the rainbow and the two sails dancing on the
waves, XI,190) ; the sound of the sea, too, is seldom alluded
to (e.g. 'Die Wellen poltern fort und fort', XI,21; 'das
Nordmeer brüllt', XII,102). His attitude towards the ocean,
too, is essentially that of a realist, witness his repeated
'Nordsee-Mordsee' (VII,155; VIII,52; XI,134) and grim epithets

like 'braune, kalte, böse Nordseewelle' (VII, 134), 'langweilig, öde, gleisst das Wattenmeer' (VII, 172), 'heimtückisch' (VIII, 18). True, he hails the North Sea as 'Du Bild der Kraft' (XI, 18) and promises himself a renewal of his strength and courage from contact with its foaming waves (VIII, 183: 'Zuflucht an die See'), but the description of the 'Wattenmeergerinsel' round his island exile (creeping 'durch Schlick und Schlamm, ein schmutzig gelbes Band', VII, 106) sounds doleful in the extreme, ending as it does with the exclamation:

Verdammt bin ich auf dieses öde Eiland,

Nur Meer, nur Meer: es ist für mich kein Freiland.

In another poem ('Trütz, Blanke Hans') he pictures the ocean as a huge monster resting between England and Brazil but awaking once a century to swamp and drown the dwellers on the Northern sea coasts; a conception which in a native of the Holstein dykes and 'Marschen' sounds natural enough. He loves an occasional battle with the waves (cf. 'Mit der Pinasse', VIII, 187; 'Hinaus ins Boot', XI, 21) and is sometimes seized by a mood which drives him to the beach post haste (cf. XI, 187:

....Den Wagen vor ! Ich will zum Deich !

Ans Meer treibt mich ein ungestüm Verlangen)

but he does not idealise the sea, still less does he sentimentalise over it . Only once (interestingly enough) he apostrophises it : 'heilig Meer' (XI,22).

There is much to remind us of Liliencron in the work of his friend and to some extent disciple Gustav Falke, a native of the North German coast like the Holstein Junker poet . For him too, the sea all through his life remains, if not his home, yet at least a necessary background of his environment ; witness the large number of his poems in which it plays a part . We see the poet slowly walking along the beach at night with his love ('Die letzte Nacht', I,12) or recalling happy days spent with her years ago 'Hintern Deich' (I,8) ; we listen to his description of a German fishing village with its rows of cottages, its boats and its nets ('Ein Gang durchs Fischerdörfchen', II,101), we hear how he once spent a 'Schäferstündchen' on the quiet shore ('Strandidyll', III,26), and we watch with him, horror-struck, while a vessel is foundering on the coast in a gale, 'death, like a huge black shadow, stretching out his hand to snap the mast and to crush her sides against the rocks' until the work of destruction is

accomplished . It is true that in these and a few other poems (e.g. cf. 'Winter', II, 27) the sea is the setting of a 'Stimmungsbild' (as it is in certain poems of Liliencron) rather than an object described for its own sake ; the collection entitled 'Der Schnitter', however, contains a set of magnificently realistic sea pictures ('Mittag', IV, 80 ; 'Die Netzflickerinnen', *ibid.* ; 'Das Lied', IV, 81 ; 'Ebbe', IV, 82 ; 'Strandbild', IV, 83). Here the scenery of the North Sea coast ('Watten', 'Schlick', 'Dünen') and its flora and fauna ('Dünenginster', 'Möwen', 'Regenpfeifer') is painted in the same manner. often in the same words, as we found it described in Liliencron's 'Poggfred'; cf. e.g. 'Mittag' :

Die Watten glühn, die Watten dünnen,
 Weit hinten schläft das müde Meer,
 Und über Watt und Dünen jagen
 Die Möwen lautlos hin und her .
 Einmal ein Schrei, ein kurzer, schriller,
 Weit hinten schläft das müde Meer,
 Und über Watt und Dünen jagen
 Lautlos die Möwen hin und her . (IV, 80)

At low tide the 'Regenpfeifer...läuft durch's Watt

So flink fast wie die M^öwen fliegen'
 in Falke (IV, 82) as he does in Liliencron (XI, 189) ; the poet's
 imaginary retreat, described in 'Thule' ('Ein Schloss am Meer
 wie sich's die Dichter träumen') seems like a copy, mutatis
 mutandis, of 'Poggfred' . Falke's attitude towards the sea,
 too, as suggested at least by a striking passage in his verse
 tale 'Die Schiffbrüchigen'¹⁾ and the grim little Low German
 poem 'De Stormfloeth'²⁾ resembles that of his friend very closely
 (vide supra). All the se and other resemblances strengthen the
 case of those who see in Falke first of all a disciple of
 Liliencron .

Another North German of the same generation , Carl Busse,
 'der Stimmungsliriker par excellence, der Momentphotographien
 lyrisch empfängt' , is usually bracketed with the two poets
 just named . He does not, however, come into consideration here,
 as the few poems into which he introduces the sea , far from
 betraying any, even the slightest, trace of Liliencron's
 realistic method, only play with the time-honoured romantic
 motifs of the mermaid ('Meergesicht, 110) and the merman
 ('Meeridyll', 111), sprites which do indeed occasionally appear
 in the pages of Liliencron and Falke, but occupy a very

1) ..das springende Ungeheuer,
 das tobende Meer, geduekt zu neuer
 raubhungriger Mordtat.. (I, 11)

2) Wat brüllt de Storm ?
 De Minsch is'n Worm !
 Wat brüllt de See ?
 'nen Dreck is he !

subordinate position there, (cf. 'Poggfred', XI, 20 ; XII, 101 ;
Falke: Gesang der Muscheln, II, 81).

Honourable mention, however, must be made of a less well-known poet, Reinhold Fuchs, whose 'Sonnete vom Nordseestrände' read like Liliencron at his best :

Leer dehnt das Watt seit Stunden sich, das kahle,
Gleich einer Tanne reigefegten Dielen ;
Trag steht das Wasser in den flachen Prielcn,
Durchglüht von heissen Sommermittagsstrahlen.
Da naht die Flut und schau ! -- mit einem Male
Siehst frische Wellen weissgemahnt du spielen
Wo deine Blicke voller Ekel fielen
Auf Tang und Schlick und Algen, widrig fahle .

('Die Flut', 65).

The resemblance between this and other poems of the same cycle, e.g. 'Auf der Hallig' , and the 'beach' passages in 'Poggfred' is too obvious to require elaborating . Realism of the same kind ('Regenpfeifer' , 'Watten' , 'Ahd' , 'Besanbaken' , 'Schlickgrund' , etc.) is also noticeable in the same author's verse tales 'Inge' (in which the scene is laid on the Frisian

coast) and 'Helga' (a tale of the Shetlands), while his 'Landschaften und Stimmungsbilder' such as 'Gudhjem' (Bornholm), 'Sommertag auf Mönchsgut', 'Die wandernde Düne', are more conventional in character. It is noteworthy, however, that apart from the authors just discussed, no German poet of the first, or even of the second rank (excepting only Richard Dehmel and certain purely local versifiers to be included in a succeeding chapter) has treated the sea during the period now under review; a phenomenon which may perhaps to some extent be accounted for by a consideration of the development taken by modern German literature during the last two generations.

The programme of the naturalistic school as well as its preoccupation with modern city life and social problems, and of the sea may be taken to exclude studies of the sea coast (viewed as parts of nature) from the very outset. There would seem to be no reason, on the other hand, why the lives of fishermen and sailors, at least of the toilers before the mast, should not have been utilised for naturalistic purposes; as Freiligrath a generation earlier had introduced the stoker of a Rhine steamer to remind a Prussian king of his helplessness

in face of the working proletariat ('Von Unten Auf ! ' ,III,124), although nothing of this sort appears to have been attempted . The little group of poems entitled 'Meerbilder' to be found in Karl Bleibtreu's 'Welt und Wille' (1886) bear the unmistakeable stamp of the Munich School and of Geibel. More noteworthy material, however, is to be met with in the poetical works of Richard Dehmel, especially in his verse tale 'Zwei Menschen', part of the second chapter('Umkreis') of which has the sea coast for its setting .There is here no deliberate realism in as much as local idiom and technical terms are avoided and no detailed description of milieu is given or even attempted ; beach, sea, and sky represent no more than the background, sketched in with a few rapid strokes, against which the figures of the two lovers stand out in bold relief ; but the effect is a picture which in its clearness and vigour is almost startlingly alive -- witness the 'Vorgang' numbered 30 :

Und sie stehn von Morgenschauern erfasst.
nackt. Die Kuste glüht perlmutterfarben.
Die Ebbenrillen furchen den Glast
wie rosige Narben ;

In der See wühlt die Windsbraut und jauchzt und tost.

.....Jetzt kommt die Flut
ich möcht ihr gleich wieder entgegenschwimmen.
Pulst sie dir auch so heiss ins Blut ?
dies Branden,dies Glimmen ?
Wie sie Kraft schöpft -- bis zum Horizont,
himmelan schwellend aus ihrem Rauch,
schwarzzottig,silberkraus ubersonnt,
voll Spannung wie ein hochschwangerer Bauch,
und der Odem der Allmacht kreist drüber her :
O Mutter See ! O Meer V' mein Meer !

It is the 'original harmony' (Urakkord) to which the lovers
imagine themselves listening in the roaring of the waves
(ibid.,,231) ; may we take it, that in this case,too, as in
so many others, they voice the poet's own opinion ?

The symbolists and neo-romantics of the Nineties,again,
e.g. Stefan George, Hugo v.Refmannsthal, Georg Mombert, Max
Dauthendey, R.M.Rilke, pursued aims which must lead them
far away from the paths trod by Liliencron and Dehmel, to
imaginary oceans (Mombert, Dauthendey) . The same applies to

the Expressionists, such as Georg Heym and the poets represented in the standard Expressionist anthology edited by Kurth Pinthus ; witness e.g. the first stanza of Heym's poem 'Mit den fahrenden Schiffen' :

Mit den fahrenden Schiffen
Sind wir vorübergeschweift
Die wir ewig herunter
Durch glänzende Winter gestreift .
Ferner kamen wir immer
Und tanzten im insligen Meer,
Weit ging die Flut uns vorbei,
Und der Himmel war schallend und leer .

(Dichtungen, p. 88).

or the same poet's macabre fantasy 'Der Fliegende Holländer' (ibid., p. 40) and even his apostrophe 'An das Meer' (ibid., p. 174). The patriotic, 'Navy League' verse of the Imperial era must be the subject of a separate chapter .

Chapter IV.

The sea ballad in modern German literature.

The Volkslied tradition which occasionally made use of the sea as the setting for a touching or adventurous story may be said to have found its continuation in numerous ballads and verse tales, examples of which are to be culled from the works of most of the poets discussed in the preceding chapters as well as from those of several others. We may group the pieces to be considered in four classes, according as they treat

- (1) every day or typical incidents occurring in the lives of fishermen, sailors or others whose profession brings them in connection with the sea (cf. Hebbel's 'Schiffers Abschied');
- (2) unusual or 'romantic' incidents staged at sea (cf. Annette v. Droste's 'Vergeltung' or Heyse's 'Braut von Cypern');
- (3) stories owing their effect to the introduction of mythological or imaginary beings such as mermaids or 'watermen' (cf. Morike's 'Schiffer-und Nixenmärchen');
- (4) historical or semi-historical events which took place on or near the sea (cf. the viking ballads of Strachwitz and Fontane).

Specimens of class (1) may be studied in the works of Rückert ('Des Kauffahrers Heimkehr', V, 14), Platen ('Fischerknabe', I, 59; 'Matrosenlied', *ibid.*, 66), Kopisch ('Der Gänger', I, 34; 'Der übers Meer gezogene Geliebte', I, 36; 'Das nächtliche Hornblasen', I, 41; 'Die Ökonomiebankissen', I, 128), Hebbel ('Der junge Schiffer', VI, 145; 'Schiffers Abschied', *ibid.*, 148), Geibel ('Mädchenlied: Nordisch', IV, 131), Allmers ('Der Halligmatrose', IV, 77, 'Der ertrunkene Fischer', *ibid.*, 80), Zoolmann ('Die Schifferin', 76) and Liliencron ('Hafenlegende', X, 78).

In each of these a simple tale is told simply and concisely: a fisherman, sailor, or merchant goes to sea, returns to his home and wife (or mistress) or is drowned; a maiden mourns for her lover who has left her to wed a ^{high born} woman in a far country; a young seaman pleads with his captain to be allowed to return to his home --- in short the motifs are those of the Volkslied. Descriptive details are almost totally absent; thus for instance the return from sea of Platen's 'Fischerknabe' is reported in one short stanza:

Des Abendsterns erschniter Schein
 Beglänzt den Saum der Flut,
 Der Knabe zieht den Kahn herein
 Der still im Hafen ruht.

Epithets, if used at all, are of a strictly conventional kind :

Es flog ein Schiff geschwinde

Es flog mit gutem Winde

Wohl "über die breite See . (Zoozmann, 'Die Schifferin')

Die Luft ist grau und grau das Meer

Der Wind fegt pfeifend drüber her.

Die M^owe kreischt, die Brandung wallt ---

(Geibel, 'Mädchenlieder').

Motifs and technique in this case approach as closely as possible to those of the anonymous Volkslied of the Middle Ages .

A different impression is conveyed by the poems of the second group . Here we encounter several of the best known ballads in German literature : Chamisso's 'Salas y Gomez' --his masterpiece, according to O. Walzel¹⁾-- Uhland's 'Der Königssohn ' and 'Das Schloss am Meer'; Annette von Droste's 'Vergeltung' -- another masterpiece ; Giesebrecht's 'Der Lotse' -- a trusty favourite , still as well known to the German schoolboy as are 'Casabianca' and 'The Wreck of the Hesperus' to the young Englishman , and Arno Holz's 'Een Boot is noch buten' ; side

1) Walzel: Chamisso's Werke (D.N.L.) p. LXXXVI .

by side with other less well remembered pieces such as Heine's 'Sklavenschiff'; 'Das Negerschiff' by A. Kopisch (describing the mutiny and subsequent shipwreck of the negroes on board a slave ship); or Heyse's verse tale 'Die Braut von Cypern'. More modern ballad writers too have made some striking contributions to this section, notably Lulu v. Strauss und Torney ('Der Seefahrer'; 'Schiff Ahoi'). It is difficult to think of poems like these in conjunction with the simple, unpretentious, Volkslied-like representatives of the first group described above; the difference in fact seems exactly that between the medieval Volkslied:

Die Frau Fischerin

Die fuhr wohl "über See

and the modern 'Kunstballade':

Die Fischer riefen und stiessen ans Land

und zogen die Kiele bis hoch auf den Strand,

denn dumpf an rollten die Fluten;

Hans Jochen aber rechnete nach

Und schüttelte finster sein Haupt und sprach:

'Ein Boot is noch buten!'

What is the difference and to what extent can it be elucidated?

We may note first of all that the motifs of the ballads in group (2) -- a shipwrecked sailor's agonies and death on a lonely island, the romantic story of the 'king's son', the sufferings endured on a slave ship, the grim retribution exacted from 'the black-haired passenger', etc. -- generally suggest more imagination than is consonant with the genuine Volkslied. It is true that this distinction does not always hold good ; the plot in Holz's poem for instance (a fishing boat lost at sea) is of the simplest and the story of the self-sacrifice of Giesebrecht's 'Pilot' is one which might well appeal to a primitive audience :

Ein ganzes Schiff voll jungen Leben
Ist wohl ein altes Leben wert .

'Salas y Gomez' and 'Vergeltung', however, could only have been written by poets taking a conscious interest in human psychology ; the same applies to the macabre phantasies of Lulu v. Strauss u. Torney ('Der Seefahrer' : a young sailor's dream of a procession of the drowned along the bottom of the sea ; 'Schiff Ahoi' : the spirit of a drowned seaman appears in broad daylight to warn his brother) ; Heine's 'Sklavenschiff' again, with its almost more than Swiftian irony and the saeva

indignatio of the humanitarian shining through every line, is unthinkable as the work of a folk poet , quite apart from the fact that the latter would scarcely have been able to invent a plot of this nature . The modern ballad writer in short, like the modern short story writer, frequently produces his best effects by means of an unusual plot .

He will also, as a rule, be found working out his details at greater length than his medieval forerunner ; cf. e.g. the account of the landing on Salas y Gomez (Walzel:Chamisso's Werke, p.381), of the approach of the vessel sighted by the castaway (ibid.,p.392) and of the outbreak of the storm in 'Vergeltung'm Lulu v.Strauss u. T.'s 'Hinter den Dünen' begins with a picture which is a poem in itself :

Der Wind,von sprühenden Tröpfen nass
Fuhr pfeifend über das Dünengras,
Die Wolken jagten sich,regenschwer,
Und hinter den Dünen dröhnte das Meer .

.....

Er liegt seitab, wo's zum Leuchtturm geht,
Der Inselfriedhof, im Sand verweht .

Sometimes local colour is applied with an even more generous

brush, as in the homesick Northerner's description of his home on the Frisian coast in the same poet's 'Okke ten Broke' :

In sengendem Blau hier steht

Der Himmel, der ewig gleiche,

Daheim der Salzwind weht

Über Dünen und Deiche !

Im Kooge weidet das rote Rind

Im Gras bis über die Flanken ,

Durch die Marschen, die gelb von Weizen sind,

Die Garbenwagen schwanken ! ,

or the first stanza of

'Das Wiegenlied' :

Wenn die Fischerweiber im Westerland barbeinig waten im Schlick,

Und unter Kiepe und Krabbennetz keuchen ^{zum} ~~in~~ Dorf zurück,

Sie biegen seitab vom Duenenpfad und hasten als ob es brennt,

Wenn eine ihnen vorüberstreicht, die jeder im Dorfe kennt.

Eine die wandert ohne Weg im Wind, der die Duenen fegt,

Eine die Gott gezeichnet hat, -- die Ketten des Bösen trägt .

(Lulu v. S. u. T., Neue Balladen, p. 22)

To some readers these descriptive passages will perhaps constitute the most attractive feature of the modern ballad .

Professional realism too is more prominent here ; Heine's

ship's surgeon for instance. 'der Doktor van der Smissen', with his report to the supercargo and his daily routine, may be cited in this connection, as well as the description of the captain in Pfeffel's amusing little trifle 'Der neue Stoiker' (a tale of a heroic parrot) :

Herr Thoms, ein alter Schiffspatron,
Der Abgott der Matrosen,
Sprach Stürmen und Korsaren Hohn
Und selbst den Wasserhosen .
Er pfiff und sang bei der Gefahr,
Und sein gewohntes Sprichwort war :
'Es hat nichts zu bedeuten'.

It is obvious, however, that in these and similar instances ('Vergeltung', 'Salas y Gomez') nautical terms, when they do occur, represent no more than casual allusions . The North German sailor 'wie er leibt und lebt', with his sou'wester, his sea boots, and his Low German speech, is remarkably, indeed unaccountably late in making his appearance in literature . Karl Woermann (1844-1912), himself the son of a well known Hamburg shipowner, would appear to have been his first sponsor; witness the realistic description, recalling Rudyard Kipling at his best, of his steam ship captain 'Wolf Hansen'.

1) K.W.: Deutsche Herzen, Dresden, 1895 .

Lulu v.S.u.T. too is no less splendidly realistic in her tales of life at sea than in her sketches of landscape ; she knows how the seaman will lie awake :

.....manchmal in der Nacht,
 Wenn's um die Koje ächzt und knarrt und kracht,
 Und oben in den Rahen pfeift die Bö,
 Und an die Achterluken klatscht die See..

('Der Seefahrer', in Neue Balladen
 u. Liederp. 32),

or how a captain will report the death at sea of one of his crew to the pastor of his native village ('Des Schifffers Brief',
 ibid., p. 43).

There can be no doubt, however, that romanticist traits are apparent in the development of the modern German ballad to a much greater extent than realistic ones . One of these is the glorification of the pirate and of the pirate's life which meets us again and again, from Freiligrath's 'Piratenromanze' (I, 51) and Geibel's 'Lied des Korsaren' (II, 35) to Liliencron's 'Ein Schrei' :

O war es doch ! Im Raubschiff der Korsaren,

Vorn halt ich Wache durch die Abendwellen,
 Klar zum Gefecht, die Enterhaken schielen,
 Und ~~hauernd~~ kauern meine Mordgesellen.

o war es doch ! (Liliencron, VIII, p. 29).

Even an ultra-modern realist like Richard Dehmel succumbs to the lure in his poem 'Der Pirat' :

Mit zehn Kanonen, blank an Bord,
 Mit vollen Segeln vor dem Wind,
 Die flink wie Möwenflügel sind,
 Streicht eine Barke durch die Flut :
 Die Barke des Piratenherrn,
 Auf allen Meeren ausgekannt
 Von einem bis zum andern Strand,
 Der Hai getauft für seinen Mut (etc.) (R.D., I, 015) ¹

As another legacy of Romanticism we may regard the perpetually recurring introduction of mermaids and water sprites, picturesque and generally beautiful, only very rarely repulsive beings whose lineage ultimately goes back, through the medieval Volkslied tradition, to the mists of the Northern foreworld, although they do not occupy a prominent place in German literature until the beginning of the Romantic

1) The fact that this purports to be a translation from the Portuguese does not affect the argument .

epoch . A mermaid rises out of the waves in Eichendorff's comic little ballad 'Seemanns Abschied' to give point to the warning addressed by the sailor to his faithless shore-dwelling wife ; Kopisch sings of the fays of Meta (near Sorrent) living in their shining grotto adorned 'mit purpurnen Korallen und Perlen wunderbar' (I,59 ; cf. also 'Die Meerfei', ibid.,63; 'Die Meerfrau und das Ufer',43) and Mörike relates a 'Schiffer- und Nixenmärchen' similar in kind to Hebbel's romance of the 'Meerfrau^alein' . Prutz too has a vision of 'Die Meeresfrau' ('Aus goldenen Tagen', 92: Ich sehe dein gol^dnes Lockenhaar

Durchflochten mit Korallen) and Geibel one of the sirens and their queens :

Im weissen Mondlicht dehnen

Sich Strand und Klippen bleich umher ;

Es baden die Sirenen

Und singen fern im Meer (III,216).

In one of Hamerling's poems (Sinnen u.M.,154) a mortal bride is kidnapped by a merman ; Liliencron, in 'Die Rache der Najaden' (VIII,209) describes the punishment meted out to the inhabitants of a fishing village who had murdered a young mermaid (cf. also 'Die Spinnerin von St. Peter, X,75) ;

'Nixe' and 'Wassermann' in fact maintain their places in German sea poetry right through the nineteenth century, the mermaid even making its voice heard in one of the most realistic passages of Liliencron's 'Poggfred' (XI, 20). A still later poetess, Lulu v. S.u.T., shows us a mermaid brought up on shore among puritanical Dutch burghers ('Die Jungfrau von Haarlem', Neue Balladen, 9). The ubiquity of these water sprites may be claimed as a remarkable example of the strength and persistence of the Romantic tradition.

It has been pointed out in an earlier chapter that of medieval ballads and poems commemorating historical events which took place on or near the sea only one, that of the pirate Störtebeker,¹⁾ appears to have come down to us. It would seem to have had no successors until the beginning of the nineteenth century, since when, however, the number of ballads dealing with naval history has grown to enormous proportions. The majority of these, not unnaturally, deal with events and heroes of North German and Scandinavian history, albeit not a few are localised in Mediterranean waters. As typical specimens of the former may be quoted the (North Sea) ballads of Strachwitz, Hebbel, Geibel, Fontane,

1) To this should perhaps be added the two Low German poems listed by Eckart (vide infra, p. 121)

Jensen, Liliencron, Falke, Lulu v.S.u.T., and Willrath Dreesen ; events taken from modern Greek history are sung by Chamisso (e.g. 'Kanaris', 256) and Kopisch ('Psaumis und Puras', III, 52); Columbus and other explorers figure in the works of Platen ('Colombos Geist', II, 23), Freiligrath ('Heinrich der Seefahrer', I, 132), C.F. Meyer ('Conquistadores', 338) ; Dutch admirals in Fontane ('Jean Bart', 217) and Liliencron ('Nis van Bombel', X, 60), while a few authors also seek their material in French and Italian history (cf. Chamisso's 'Bisson vor Stampala⁽³⁰⁸⁾' and 'Die stille Gemeinde', 406 ; v. Fallersleben : 'Des Galeerensklaven Morgenlied', II, ; C.F. Meyer: 'Venedigs erster Tag', 144, 'Der Mönch von Bonifazio', 301). Two poems dealing with Charlemagne (Uhland : 'König Karls Meerfahrt' ; Martin Greif : 'Kaiser Karl und die Normannen', II, 31) also deserve mention, although the list here given does not aim at being exhaustive, owing to the enormous amount of material available .

The technique of the ballads listed in this group (4) is essentially the same as that of those on group (2). It will suffice therefore to refer to what has already been said above on this head .

Chapter V.

The navy and naval aspirations in modern German poetry.

It was one of the most firmly cherished beliefs held by certain German patriots before the Great War that British seamen were in the habit of deriding their young fleet as 'The navy of the day before yesterday' ('Die Marine von vorgestern'). The admittedly recent origin of the late Imperial navy lends point to the gibe ; it does not, however, account for the almost complete absence of the patriotic note from German sea poetry up to the middle of the nineteenth century . We have already had occasion to point out that the magnificent achievements of the Hanseatic League appear to have left no traces in medieval literature and that even to the Hamburger Brockes the sea was no more than the source of Hamburg's 'Handlung und Gewinn' . Lappe allows his imagination to play on the voyages and adventures of the ship which he sees launched , but no thought of the flag she is to fly or the honour she may win for her (presumably) German builders seems to have occurred to him . Goethe and the poets of the Rügen school too, as well as Heine and the Romanticists display no interest in matters of this sort . Only Platen once, in a poem addressed to 'Dem Grafen

Friedrich Fugger' refers mournfully to the glories of the past:

...deines Stammes Altvordere beuteten wahrlich
Nicht umsonst Goldgruben aus ,
Sandten kein Kaufschiff, von deutschen Wimpeln umflattert,
umsonst
Nach dem noch jungfräulichen indischen Weltmeer.

.....

Aber nicht mehr blüht die germanische Schifffahrt.

(IV, 118 et seq.).

The poem in question was composed in March 1835¹⁾. The date is perhaps not altogether without significance. For it was in the same year (10 Dec. 1835) that the German Diet began its offensive against the 'Young Germany' movement, thus provoking, or at least accentuating, the propaganda campaign which voiced the aspirations of the men of 1848 -- a democratic government, a strong German Empire, and a German fleet. 'Schiekt neue Flotten aus !' -- Max Schneckenburger, the author of 'Die Wacht am Rhein', called to the German Hanse towns in a well known poem²⁾ describing how the delight of Father Ocean at seeing a proud steamer dashing through the green flood flying the Hamburg flag ; 'Ha Hamburg ! Du vor allen

Bist Deutschlands Turm und Tor . '

1) *ibid.*, IV, 117, note .

2) published in 1840 .

It is a long time, the 'Nordmeergreis' explains, since he saw a German ship on the 'German ocean' :

Wohl lang mit trübem Schmollen
 Lag ich im tiefen Meer
 Und sah mit finstern Grollen
 Der Schiffe wohl ein Heer ,
 Doch deutsche Wasser waren
 Den Fremden untertan ,
 Ich sah sie alle fahren,
 Den Briten stolz voran .

Herwegh too, in a poem 'Zur Säkularfeier der Stiftung des Hansabundes, 1841', ('Die deutsche Flotte') expressed similar sentiments : 'das Meer macht frei.' . A marginal note by the poet's own hand stresses his meaning still more emphatically :
 'Soll in der Welt nur der englische Geist gepflegt werden ?
 Schlägt die Flut nicht mahnend auch an dein Gestade ? -- Ein
 Todespfeil im Herzen Englands ist jedes deutsche Schiff.'¹⁾
 Two years later Freiligrath in his 'Flottenträume' (III, 99) called for 'more ships' :

Sprach irgendwo in Deutschland eine Tanne :
 O könnt ich hoch als deutscher Kriegsmast ragen !
 O könnt ich stolz die deutsche Flagge tragen !
 Des ein'gen Deutschlands in der Nordsee Banne !

1) 'Briefe eines Lebendigen', p. 112 .

He imagines himself already beholding a squadron of German battle ships bearing the names of 'Arndt', 'Frederick the Great', 'Königin Luise', 'Luther', 'Goethe', 'Schiller' and other heroes and heroines of German history :

So seh im Geist, ein trotzig Kriegsgeschwader,
Ich Wacht sie halten, festiglich und stets,
Wo weiland nur des Evers Wimpel wehte,
Ein Buxtehuder etwa oder Städer .

(Several nautical terms used : 'Flagge', 'Ever', 'Wimpel', 'Fregatte', 'Bugspriet', and others, are characteristic of Freiligrath's realistic method ; vide supra, p. 64)

History relates how these dreams came true (for a time) through the creation of a 'Reichsflotte' . It records also, however, the inglorious end of this fleet shortly after the downfall of the revolutionary government (1849) and the renewed eclipse of Germany as a sea power , a disappointment which found pathetic expression in the sombre poem of Richard Hamerling entitled 'Ein deutscher Admiral' describing how the dying admiral of the late German fleet, Brommy, ordered that his flag, which he had kept, was to be buried in his grave :

Du wirst mit mir nicht modern
Bis einst die Brande lodern

Des neuen Morgenstrahls !

Wenn dann Allddeutschland, neubelebt,

Als Phoenix aus der Asche schwebt,

Des letzten bunten Pfahls,

Dann hofts mit Reuschmerzen

Sein Banner sich vom Herzen

Des toten Admirals !

(Sinnen u. M., 272).

The black-red-and-gold German ensign which had meant so much to Admiral Brommy did in fact disappear from the high seas until after the foundation of the Hohenzollern empire its place was taken by the black-white-and-red flag. It is because she flies the Rostock colours ('Vagel Griep') that John Brinckman recognises a vessel from his native city in a foreign port:

Dat wir dei Bucht van Halifax,

All Schöp in'n Sünndagsstat ;

Dor weigten hunnert Junionjacks,

Dannbrogs un Hanseat,

Hollansch un Fransche Trikolur,

Bei Yanki Stirn un Strip,--

Man kein so flott und kein so stur

Aa du, ol Vagel Griep !

(J.B., p.5)

With the increase of German power and wealth under the Bismarckian regime, however, maritime and naval aspirations again begin to make themselves felt in literature . The foundation of the German Colonial Association (1882) and of the Navy League (1898) in particular synchronise with the outburst of a veritable flood of propaganda designed to emphasise and illustrate William II's announcement that Germany's future lies upon the water, and not a little of this was in verse . Anthologies like those of Börker,¹⁾ Bern,²⁾ Pompecki³⁾ collect and popularise these new children of the patriotic muse, such as R.Linderer's 'Flaggenlied', Rudolf Presber's 'Die Helden vom Iltis', and W.Brandes's 'Deutsch-Afrika' and 'Die Piratenflagge', sometimes reinforcing them by reprints of older poems representing similar tendencies which have already been discussed in these pages . Little if anything of this 'Navy League' verse, it is safe to say, has succeeded in winning a permanent place in German literature . Patriotic purpose and vigour are its outstanding characteristics, but neither form nor diction present anything in any sense deserving to be called striking or original .

1) Flotte u. Kolonie im Spiegel deutscher Dichtung, 1911.

2) Ahoi! Deutsche Meereslyrik (no date).

3) Volldampf voraus, deutsche Flotten-u. Seemannalieder,

4) Börker .

5) e.g. Herwegh's 'Deutsche Flotte', Geibel's 'Seeräuber-geschichte', H.Hoffmann's 'Ins Meer, ins freie Meer hinaus' .

Chapter VI.

The sea in modern Low German poetry .

The intimate connection subsisting between sea poetry and geography, in other words the likelihood of material for our study coming to us from coast dwellers and travellers rather than from inland poets, is an assumption the truth of which a priori considerations alone would suggest to be obvious, even without the additional proofs supplied by the preceding chapters. We would seem to have a right then to expect a large harvest from the literature of the Low German peoples, in whose ears for over two thousand years has been the thunder of Northern seas . 'A mighty oaktree standing by the sea, its branches stretching from Pomerania to the Netherlands' -- thus Fritz Reuter in his much quoted poem symbolises the vernacular and spiritual heritage of his people ; a magnificent comparison, borne out by geography no less than by history . It was an Old Saxon poet who showed us the Saviour and his disciples battling with the waves on the Lake of Gennesareth ; they were Low Germans again who in a later age sang of Störtebeker,¹⁾ Gode Michel, and other famous pirates such as Martin Pechlin and Knyphoff²⁾ ; the voyage of St. Brandan, too, most popular of

1) Stortebeker und Gode Michel,

De roveden beide tho glikten deel

Tho water und ok tho lande , (Erk u. Bohm, II, p. 19, vide supra, p.

2) Van Marten Pechlin siner Geschicht,

Wat he to Seefahrt hefft uthgericht, (listed by Eckart, p. 101)

3) Van Knyphoff syner Legent, (ibid., p. 103).

medieval sailor saints, is extant in a rhymed Low German version¹⁾. The immediately following centuries are barren of materials ; the void, however, is sufficiently to be accounted for by the eclipse of Low German literature which may be dated, roughly, from the Reformation and the triumph of Luther's 'Bibelsprache'. The Low German works of Joachim Rachel and of Lauremberg, as well as those of J.H.Voss yield nothing. Has the Low German literary revival of our own days been more productive in this respect ?

Its first prominent pioneer (and, it will be safe to add, its greatest poet), Klaus Groth, tells us himself that the home of his ancestors, Dithmarschen, where he was born and bred, lies in the North by the sea :

Dar liggt int Norn en Landeken deep,

.....

Un eensam liggt de Strand,

Dar blenkt de See, dar blenkert de Schep,

Dat is min Vaderland . (Quickborn, p.231)

He has painted this 'Landeken' for us in his 'Quickborn' -- its low beach covered by the waves at high tide, its fat pasture lands (Marsch) and wild moors (Geest), its old world villages and sturdy, slow spoken, conservative, Saxo-Frisian inhabitants,

1) reprinted in Panzer's Annalen der alteren deut. Lit., p.41 et seq. ; technique - that of the M.H.G. epics, vide supra, Part I.

as it had never been painted before and was not, in fact, to be painted again until the days of Liliencron ; some of his descriptions indeed, like those of the uprush of the tide in 'De Floth' (Quickborn, p. 102) or of the beach at ebb ('Rumpelkamer, ibid., p. 118) reveal such a striking anticipation of the characteristic manner of the later poet as to set the reader speculating to what extent we may take Liliencron to have been indebted to his forerunner . The last-mentioned passage may be quoted as an example :

Wi wahn bi Busen dicht ant Haf,
Um Hus un Wurth en brede Graff,
En Brugg na Strat, nan Dik en Steg,
Denn segn wi awer de Watten weg .

.....

Nu schunn de Waggen grau un gron,
Nu wert en Del do drog un schön .
Un weeg der'n Segel stolt un hell,
So drom ik mit vun Well to Well ;
Un leeg de Strand der still un witt,
So seet un sunn un drom ik mit .
Denn speln de Möwen op den Slick,
Denn gingen de Schap ann Butendik,

Denn seeg de Scheper as en Pahl
Mit Hund un Stock wun Dik hendal .

The resemblance between the last lines of this passage and the description of the 'Butendick' in Liliencron's 'Poggfred' is obvious . 'Ol Busum' too -- Groth's poem of the island overwhelmed by the waves -- reminds us that Liliencron treated a similar theme ³⁾.

An analysis of the contents of 'Quickborn', however, does not warrant the assertion that the sea or the sea shore occupied a particularly prominent position in the author's work and thoughts. His object, like that of most dialect poets, is to portray 'his own people, their thoughts, feelings and experiences', rather than the landscape, and the heroes and heroines of his little sketches, the miller, the milkmaid, the shoemakers who went a-fishing, 'Peter Plumm', 'Hanne ut Frankrik', 'Peter Kunrad', etc., usually have their interests centred on dry land well inside the outer dykes . True, their sea going neighbours have not been altogether neglected ; thus the fisherman's wife sings us her child's lullaby ('De Schipperfrü', Q., p. 156), we see the pilot and his daughter scouring the sea for wreckage after a gale ('De Lotsendochter', ibid., p. 247) and listen to

1) vide supra, p. 9. 2) Like other poets, e.g. W. Müller, Lappe, Heine, Geibel, Freiligrath . 3) 'Trutz, Blanke Hans', VII, p. 155 . 4) J. Lees: The German Lyric, p. 220 . 5) cf. Biese: Deut. Litgesch., III, p. 155 : Naturstimmungsbilder im engeren Sinne kennt K. Groth eigentlich nicht ; wo er die Natur darstellt...verbindet er sie stets mit menschlichen Stimmungen u. Empfindungen u. mit den Regungen seines eigenen Herzens .

the young skipper's pleadings with his sweetheart ('Schippers Brut', ibid., p. 247). All these poems, however, like the ballad-like 'Hartleed' (ibid., p. 195) and 'De Fischerkath' (ibid., p. 155) are of the utmost brevity and their technique is that of the Volslied, the setting being only indicated by a word or a few lines :

Buten geit dat wille Haf,
 Dat weigt din Vader wul op un af .. ('De Schipperfru'),

 De Morgen grau int Osten,
 De See de gung so hoch, so holl ;
 Wat drev dar rop vunt Osten ?
 Dar drev en kentert Joll.... ('De Letsendoehder').

Klaus Groth's contribution to our material in fact is disappointingly small, even though 'Ol Busum' has forced its way into most German standard anthologies and 'De Fischerkath' is a little gem which we should be sorry to be without . He was a Low German whose thoughts were more often with the plough than with the oar .

The same holds good of his two famous contemporaries and to some extent rivals, Fritz Reuter and John Brinckman . The total

absence of any allusions to the sea in the works of the former is not a matter for surprise ; Inspektor Bräsig and his fellow-countrymen of the 'Läuschen un Rimels' being nothing if not bucolic, farmers and peasants with the heavy clay of Mecklenburg clinging to their bootheels in perpetuity . Stavenhagen too, the original home of their creator, lies far inland and the interests of its inhabitants, as described by Reuter himself, are purely agricultural . It is somewhat strange, however, that Brinckman, the Rostocker and descendant of a long line of Hanseatic merchants and seafarers, whose prose works ('Kaspar-Ohm un ick', 'De Generalrheder', etc.) betray such an intimate knowledge of the lives and habits of North German seamen, should as a lyricist have shown himself almost oblivious of the existence of the ocean . The opening poem of 'Vagel Grip' refers to an experience in a Canadian harbour but the remainder of the volume contains no other mention of the sea ; in the words of his biographer : 'Strandbiller un Seeluft sünd hier kuum ens antodrapen.'¹⁾ The Low German muse of modern times would indeed appear to be possessed by almost a traditional distrust of nautical or marine motifs . J.H.Fehrs , 'der bedeutendste neuplattddeutsche Lyriker der Neuzeit'²⁾ , avoids them altogether ; 'Gorch Fock' (Johannes Kinau, 1880-1916), 'der grösste'³⁾ plattddeutsche

1) J.B.'s Samtl. Werke, p.3 .

2) Eckart, p.290 .

3) H.A.Kruger: D.plattd.Lit.d.Gegenwart, quoted in Niedersachsenbuch, 3.Jahrg., 1918, p.30.

Seedichter seit Brinckman', chose prose as the medium for his magnificent descriptions of North Sea fishermen and 'Hamburger Janmooten '. What the latter could have given us , had he elected to embody his experiences in verse, we may guess at from the stray snatches of rhyme to be found in the little volume published after his death in the battle of Jutland, 'Sterne uberm Meer', such as the one entitled 'Gedanken' :

Ik sit un schrief un tell un reken
de ganzen Dog, de ganzen Weken,
de ganzen Moond,de ganzen Johren,
as harr ik buten nix verlorn ...
Lot ober mol de Wulken trecken,
so siet,as wulln 's op't Dack silk leggen,
un lot den Storm ut Westen susen,

.....

denn reugt sik wat in Hart un Blot,
Denn kiek ik op bi Huhn un Tuten,
un mien Gedanken jumpt no buten
un lopt un flegt,as harrn se 't Feber,
un seukt sik merrn op See een Ewer,
een Fischerewer. de dor dukt,
de deep un bull int Woter stukt,

vorm Stormseils klust un rebenin,
 dor stell ik mi ant Rur mit hin !
 Ik frog den Schipper nich erst langen,
 ik fot mit an un bun nich bangen,
 ik stoh nu an den luttjen Mast,
 dor binn' ik mi mit 'n Strohtau fast
 un kiek no 'n Kumpass, no den Topp,
 Seestebeln an, Sudwester op,
 kiek öber Luv un öber Lee,
 vergeten is de Schrieberes :
 ik bun op See, op See, op See ... ('St.u.M., p.169).

There is realism here, driven home with all the vigour of presentation and skill in selecting details which mark the finest passages in Fock's prose works, e.g. the brilliant description of a North Sea gale in 'Hein Godenwind', but the hand that penned these verses will write no more . The lesser Low German bards of our own day, gallant if obscure supporters of the 'Niedersachsen' or 'Heimatkunst' movement, whose fame as a rule does not travel beyond the confines of their own provincial or municipal area, ~~threaten~~ threaten to grow into more and more numerous battalions ; local anthologies, however,

such as Poppe's 'Album Oldenburgerschär Dichter', Pompecki's 'Westpreussische Poeten', or Guhlke's 'Pommersche Dichtung', reveal little worth noting. ¹⁾ Occasionally an author will endeavour to voice the feelings of the Low German seaman in a vigorous (if hardly lifelike) little stanza like the following :

Je feller de Boen,
 Je willer de Seen,
 Je duller dat Meer,
 Je gröter is Janmoots Fleiseer,

.....

Wi gaht ok bi Storm unner Segel .

(F. Poppe, in: Album O.D., p. 183),

or in a poem like Gurlitt's 'Alle Mann an Deck' :

Alle Mann to Deck ! -- De Seils herunner,
 Dat lutte Stormseil duppelt refft ,
 Un klar dat Deck ! -- Nu gelt dat, Kinner,
 Nu kommt de Ernst von uns Geschäft ! (etc.)

(O. Dahnhardt, 'Heimatsklänge',
 I, p. 30)

Yet it would not be possible to name a modern Low German poet, known to more than a small circle of local enthusiasts, whose treatment of the sea would entitle him to special consideration

1) cf. Bibliography, C.

The very regions from which most might have been expected, regions which have been nurseries of hardy seamen ever since the days of Caesar and Tacitus, prove most barren of material. Low Germany in short has not yet found its Kipling .

The probable causes of this remarkable failure of North German nautical tradition to embody itself in popular verse and song have frequently been discussed and the inquiry has resulted in the establishing of several noteworthy facts. It has been pointed out, for instance, that the commonly received explanation which is best summed up in the dictum : *Frisia non cantat*', supported though it is by the authority of H. Allmers, cannot be accepted without certain reservations, Ostfriesland in particular being able to produce a far from contemptible number of poets and songsters . An English investigator, Miss L.A. Smith, whose endeavours to collect sea songs among members of the German mercantile marine are described in her book 'The Music of the Waters', attributes the paucity of material obtained to the familiarity of large numbers of German seamen with classical music which tends to render them independent of the efforts of the Low German muse . H. Allmers who likewise laments the want of sea songs in modern German, declares that North German sailor reads, writes, and sings in High German,

1) H.A. : *Marschenbuch*, (1857) p.166.

2) cf. Poeck : *D. See i.d. platt. Lyrik*; H. Siercks : *Kl. Groth* (1899) p.33: Wiederholt wird von Groth in seinen Aufzeichnungen das bekannte Wort '*Holsatia non cantat*' als durchaus unzutreffend zurückgewiesen (et seq.).

3) 'The Germans have no organised set of chanties' . (p.229).

while he thinks in Low German . 'Ein solcher Zwiespalt hindert aufs Entschiedenste die Gestaltung des Gefühls zum Liede.'

Whatever the explanation, however, the smallness of the contribution made to our subject by speakers of Low German is a fact which cannot be denied .

Miss Smith is able, however, to print several popular folks songs, including a Low German ditty beginning 'Hannes heit ik, seggt hei, ik bun Kock' ('The Jolly Cook'), a shorter version of which has more recently found favour with German youth (possibly owing to its inclusion in the song book 'Der Zupfgeigenhansl') and contains an additional stanza in which the awe-inspiring ferocity and gargantuan appetite of the pirate Stortebeker are described :

Stortebeker, seggt hei, de Pirat,
De was bannig, seggt hei, desperat.
Frett taum Ffuhstück, seggt hei,
 'n groten Stór,
Metz un Gabel, seggt hei, achterher.

Conclusion .

'The present dissertation' , the writer stated in his introduction, 'represents an attempt to marshal and characterise the materials for a comprehensive study of the part played by sea poetry in the corpus of German literature as a whole.' It cannot claim, and is not, indeed (for obvious reasons) intended to afford a complete collection of all passages dealing with the sea which may be encountered in the whole stock of German poetry, printed or unprinted, although it is hoped that few important data have been overlooked . A systematic study of late mediæval, more particularly of Low German, remains, for instance, would in all probability yield a certain amount of additional material ; the lyrical and ballad poetry of the present day too represents a field where much has perforce had to be left to future investigators . Even such as it is, however, the evidence assembled above from what may be called the universally recognised representatives of German poetry is sufficient to justify us in drawing certain definite conclusions .

We may note first of all that the bulk of our material, even allowing for the fact that Part I. might have been more

fully documented than has been deemed necessary for the purposes of this study, dates from the later eighteenth century. Of early medieval sea poetry (~~if-any-such-existed~~) next to nothing has come down to us ; M.H.G. poets do not sing the sea except when it forms part of the setting of their story. Its position in the Volkslied is negligible ; to Opitz and his successors of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century the ocean appears to have been no more than a source of picturesque metaphors and similes . It was Graf Stolberg and his contemporaries (Kosegarten, Lappe, W. Müller) who 'discovered' the sea -- as other forerunners of the Romantic movement in the same century first learned to notice and appreciate the beauty of the mountains -- and handed the torch on to Heinrich Heine, the best known, if not actually the first, modern German sea poet; after whose time, from the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards, our material rapidly grows in amount and importance .

It is not possible, however, to ^{maintain} ~~assert~~ -- we take this to be the second result of our investigation -- that all or even much of the work produced since the appearance of the 'Nordseebilder' has been such as to challenge comparison with that of Heine . For a long time, until the last quarter (roughly

speaking) of the nineteenth century conventional and reflective poetry holds the field ; time-honoured Romantic motifs such as fisher girls, mermaids, lost cities, and viking raids, recur with monotonous regularity and much of the 'sea side poetry' of Platen, Kopisch, Grün, Hoffmann v. Fallersleben, Sturm, Geibel, Lings, Hamerling, Schack, and Greif deserves no other title than that of 'Reflexionspoesie' . Two great poets only stand out above the rest : Nikolaus Lenau and Freiligrath . About the middle of the century, however, a more realistic (impressionistic) technique (foreshadowed to some extent by Lappe, Lenau, and Freiligrath) makes its appearance in the work of Klaus Groth, Jensen, Hoffmann, and Storm and ~~was~~^{is} brought to perfection by one of the greatest sea poets of his century, Detlev v. Liliencron, who in turn ^{leaves} ~~left~~ his mark on a number of younger writers, notably Gustav Falke and Reinhold Fuchs .

The patriotic note is not struck until the middle of the nineteenth century ('1848'). Attention also deserves to be called to the disappointingly small contribution made to our material from Low German sources; a phenomenon which , like the remarkably|late appearance in German sea poetry of the professional sailor 'wie er leibt und lebt', has not yet received an entirely satisfactory explanation .

The material collected by us finally reveals the development of a gradual change in the attitude of the German poet towards the ocean . Medieval man frankly fears, not to say detests it; the first of the moderns, including Opitz, Broekes, and even to some extent Goethe, ^{seem} are likewise repelled rather than attracted; a few nineteenth century poets (Lenau, Hamerling, Lingg) are filled with awe at the thought of it, but ever since the days of Stolberg and the writers of the Rügen School most German poets have loudly proclaimed their love of 'das heilige Meer', even though recognising to the full , like e.g. Storm, Lilien-cron, and Falke, its 'viciousness' --- 'Nordsee, Mordsee'!

In this respect too/then the history of German sea poetry may be seen to culminate in a triumph of realism.

FINIS.

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